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THE

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

BY THE NORTHMEN,

In the Tenth Century,

WITH

NOTICES OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENTS OF THE IRISH IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

BY

NORTH LUDLOW BEAMISH,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, AND MEMBER OF THE ROYAL DANISH SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE GERMAN LEGION," ETC.

"Der är flagga på mast och den visar åt Norr!"—TEGNER.

LONDON:

T. AND W. BOONE, NEW BOND STREET.

1841.

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TO

CHARLES CHRISTIAN RAFN,

KNIGHT OF THE ROYAL DANISH ORDER OF DANNEBROG, OF THE

ROYAL SWEDISH ORDER OF THE NORTH STAR,

COUNSELLOR OF STATE TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF DENMARK,

PROFESSOR OF NORTHERN LITERATURE,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON,

AND

SECRETARY TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES

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PREFACE.

AMONGST the various, valuable, and important publications of the Royal Danish Society of Northern Antiquaries, that which has created the greatest general interest in the literary world is the able and elaborate work of Professor Rafn, which came out at Copenhagen in the year 1837, under the title of ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ, *sive Scriptores Septentrionales rerum Anti-Columbianarum in America.*

This interesting publication, the fruit of great literary labour, and extensive research, clearly shews that the eastern coast of North America was discovered and colonized by the Northmen *more than five-hundred years* before the reputed discovery of Columbus.

These facts rest upon the authority of antient Icelandic manuscripts preserved in the Royal and University Libraries of Copenhagen, and which have now been, for the first time, translated and made public. Fac-similes of the most important of these documents are given in Professor Rafn's work, together with maps and delineations of antient monuments illustrative of the subject; a Danish and Latin translation follows the Icelandic text, and the whole is accompanied by introductory observations, philological and historical remarks, as well as archæological and geographical disquisitions of high interest and value.

The design of the writer of the following pages is to put before the public in a cheap and compendious form, those parts of Professor Rafn's work, which he considered were likely to prove most interesting to British readers, the greater part of whom, from the expense and language of the original publication, must necessarily be debarred from

its perusal. The translations of the Sagas and other Icelandic manuscripts, which embrace the whole detail of the discoveries and settlements in America, are made substantially from the Danish version, of the correctness of which, coming from the pen of the learned Editor, there could be no doubt; but in some cases, where the style of this version appeared to the translator to depart too much from the quaint and simple phraseology of the original, the Icelandic text has been specially referred to, and an effort has been made throughout, to give to the English narrative, the homely and unpretending character of the Icelandic Saga. In all cases where it was thought possible that doubts might arise, or where it was considered necessary to impress some particular fact or statement upon the mind of the reader, the original Icelandic word or expression is given; and free use has been made of the copious and lucid notes and commentaries of the learned Editor, to explain or illustrate the various etymological, historical, and geographical points which call for observation: as an appropriate introduction to the whole, is prefixed a sketch of the rise, eminence, and extinction of Icelandic historical literature, founded upon the able Danish Essay of Dr. Erasmus Müller, Bishop of Zealand.

The eminent historian Dr. Robertson appears to have been totally unacquainted with the early voyages of the Northmen to the western hemisphere, and hence it is presumed, that the present summary of their discoveries may be received as an acceptable introduction to his celebrated History of America.

The incidental allusions to the voyages and settlements of the Irish, which are contained in the Minor Narratives, are more likely to excite than satisfy enquiry; much still remains to be unravelled on this interesting subject, and it is to be regretted that no competent hands have yet been applied to this neglected portion of Irish history. It has

been too much the practice to decry as fabulous, all statements claiming for the earlier inhabitants of Ireland, a comparatively high degree of advancement and civilization, and notwithstanding the many valuable publications connected with the history and antiquities of that country, which have from time to time, come forth, and the more recent candid, learned, and eloquent production of Mr. Moore,* there are not wanting, (even among her sons) those who, with the anti-Irish feeling of the bigotted Cambrensis, would sink Ireland in the scale of national distinction, and deny her claims to that early eminence in religion, learning, and the arts, which unquestionable records so fully testify.

And yet a very little unprejudiced enquiry would be sufficient to satisfy the candid mind, that Erin had good claims to be called the "School of the West," and her sons:—

"Inclyta gens hominum, Milite, Pace, Fide."†

Thus much, at least, will the following pages clearly shew: that sixty-five years previous to the discovery of Iceland by the Northmen in the ninth century, Irish emigrants had visited and inhabited that island;—that about the year 725, Irish ecclesiastics had sought seclusion upon the Farœ islands;—that in the tenth century, voyages between Iceland and Ireland were of ordinary occurrence; and that in the eleventh century, a country west from Ireland, and south of that part of the American continent, which was discovered by the adventurous Northmen in the preceding age, was known to them under the name of White Man's Land or GREAT IRELAND.

Cork, April, 1841.

* History of Ireland, by Thomas Moore, "a work in which," says Hallam, "the claims of his country are stated favourably, and with much learning and industry, but not with extravagant partiality." See Introduc. to Liter. of Europe in the Middle Ages, by Henry Hallam, F.R.A.S. Vol. I. p. 7, note.

† Donatus, Bishop of Fiesoli. See p. 222.

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" Der är flagga på mast och den visar åt Norr,
Och i Norr är den älskade jord;
Jag vill följa de himmelska vindarnas gång,
Jag vill styra tillbaka mot Nord."

FRITHIOF'S SAGA AF. TEGNER.

INTRODUCTION.

SKETCH OF THE RISE, EMINENCE, AND EXTINCTION OF ICELANDIC HISTORICAL LITERATURE.

"There's the flag on the mast, and it points to the North,
And the North holds the land that I love;
I will steer back to northward, the heavenly course
Of the winds, guiding sure from above!"

TEGNER—*see ante.*

THE national literature of Iceland holds a distinct and eminent position in the literature of Europe. In that remote and cheerless isle, separated by a wide and stormy ocean, from the more genial climates of southern lands, religion and learning took up their tranquil abode, before the south of Europe had yet emerged from the mental darkness, which followed the fall of the Roman Empire. There the unerring memories of the Skalds and Sagamen were the depositories of past events, which, handed down, from age to age, in one unbroken line of historical t radition, were committed to writing on the introduction of Christianity, and now come before us with an internal evidence of their truth, which places them amongst the highest order of historical records.

To investigate the origin of this remarkable advancement in mental culture, and trace the progressive steps by which Icelandic literature attained an eminence, which even now imparts a lustre to that barren land, is an object of interesting and instructive inquiry, and will, it is presumed, form an acceptable introduction to the perusal of the ancient Icelandic manuscripts, which constitute the text of the present volume.

The author has, therefore, availed himself of an able essay by Bishop Müller on this interesting subject,* to put before his readers, in a concise form, the leading characteristics of that peculiar state of society, which generated these evidences of peaceful and civilized pursuits, and gave birth to productions, which, like their own Aurora, stood forth the Northmen's meteor in the shades of night!

Among no other people of Europe can the conception and birth of historical literature be more clearly traced, than amongst the people of Iceland. Here it can be shewn how memory took root, and gave birth to narrative; how narrative multiplied and increased until it was committed to writing; how the written relation became eventually sifted and arranged in chronological order, until at length, in the withering course of time, the breath which had given life and character to the whole, fled hence, and only the dead letter remained behind.

But why was it Icelanders, in particular, who kindled the torch of history in the North? How came its light to spread so far from this remote and unimportant island? What cause led Icelanders more than any other people, to a minute observation of both the present and the past? How came they to clothe these recollections in connected narratives, and eventually to commit them to writing?— are questions which first naturally present themselves, and the true solution of which, can alone lead to a correct estimate of the value of Icelandic annals.

It is well known that, when towards the end of the ninth century, Iceland had been discovered by the roving northern Vikings, the imperious sway of Harald Haarfager,

* Om den islandske Historie-skrifnings Oprindelse, Flor og Undergang, af Dr. Peter Erasmus Müller, Biskop over Siællands Stift, published in the Nordisk Tidskrift for Oldkyndighed, 1 B. 1 H. Kjöbenhavn, 1832. For the authorities on which this Essay is founded, the reader is referred to the publication itself, of which the present sketch, in all its historical features, may be considered an epitome.

led many Norwegians to seek safety and independence in that distant island. But its remote position rendered the voyage thither both difficult and dangerous; not one amongst hundreds of fugitives,—scarcely the chiefs themselves, who possessed large ships,—could provide the necessary outfit for a voyage, which often lasted for half the year; and the colonization of the new country was necessarily slow and progressive, and confined, at first, to the high-minded and more wealthy chieftains of the western coast. But the intelligence was soon abroad that brave and daring men had established themselves in a new country, where the cattle could provide for themselves in winter, where the waters were full of fish, and the land abounding in wood; and many therefore determined upon removing to this favoured region. The tide of emigration from Norway progressively increased, and soon became so great, that Harald, fearing that his kingdom would, eventually, be left desolate, prohibited it altogether, and laid a tax upon every voyager to Iceland.

The chiefs took their families, servants, slaves, and cattle; and many kinsmen and relatives, who were accustomed to follow the fortunes of the chief, accompanied him also on this new venture. The particular locality of their future residence, was determined by the wind and weather, united with an implicit faith in the superintending guidance of the tutelary idol, under whose invocation the seat-posts * were cast into the sea, and wherever these happened to be washed ashore, was the dwelling raised.

* Ondvegissúlur, or Setstokkar. These were tall carved wooden pillars, attached to the seat of the chief, and ornamented at the top with the figures of his tutelary deities, generally Thor or Odin; the superstitious preference given to that particular part of the coast, upon which they happened to be cast, was so great, that Ingolf, the first Norwegian settler in Iceland, after a residence of three years at Ingólfshöfdi, where he first landed, removed to the unfavourable situation of the present capital, Reykjavik, on finding that his *Setstokka* had drifted to that point. Antiq. Amer. p. 9, note a.; Islands

In the course of sixty years, the whole island had become thus colonized. Meantime the first settlers had acquired no means of circumscribing the movements of the last, who with the same independent spirit as their predecessors, took possession of that particular tract of country, which appeared to them most eligible; and the extent of the land, the difficulties of the voyage, and the limited number of the population, admitted, for some time, the continuance of this arbitrary appropriation. Amicable restrictions were the only checks that could be at first opposed to such unconstrained and uncertain movements, and these were all either of Norwegian origin, or brought directly from Norway. For many of the settlers were related by ties of blood; the greater number had made common cause against Harald; in their native land, they had been accustomed to meet together at the Court (Thing), in the temple, at the great feast of Yule, at the periodical offerings to their idols—and thus, naturally, and with one accord, they were led to establish a form of self-government somewhat similar to that under which they had lived in Norway. The absence of any despotic ruler gave, however, the new community a great advantage over the parent state, and hence arose a constitution more free than the model upon which it had been formed.

This little republic was held together solely by moral

Opdagelse og Bebyggelse af N. M. Petersen, Nord. Tidsk. for Oldkyn. B. 1. p. 258-9. Tegner thus describes the Setstokka in the banquetting hall of Frithiof:—

——————— " hög sätespelarne båda
Stodo för ändan deraf, två Gudar skurna af almträd;
Oden med herrskareblick, och Frej med solen på hatten."
Frithiofs Saga III. p. 18.

——————— the high seat pillars both
Stood there, two Gods of fairest elm-wood carved
Odin with lordly mein, and brilliant Frey,
Around whose head the radiant sunshine plays.

laws. Some of the richer emigrants had slaves, which after putting to cultivate some particular lands, they liberated: all others were free; the sturdy yeoman was the unrestricted lord of his own soil; if he came into collision with his neighbour, and thought himself more powerful, he slew him without scruple, but thereupon immediately endeavoured either through the intercession of the chief of the district, or some other influential person, to screen himself from reproach, or effect a reconciliation with the friends of the deceased, by the payment of a fine.

The situation of chief generally arose from the relative position of the ship's-company in the mother country, which led to one particular individual among the crew, taking possession of the new district in his own name; but it oftener depended upon property or personal bravery. Was he a gallant warrior, or could afford to keep more servants and slaves than his neighbours, his assistance became of importance in settling disputes: and the same cause produced a reciprocal feeling in support of the chief, on the part of those whom he assisted.

Before a certain number of statutes had been collected and formally established, the people followed the old customs of their native land, the parties themselves naming their judges from amongst the neighbouring yeomen; but although there was no want of legal forms, to which they could appeal, or chicanery, by which justice could be evaded, the result more often depended upon the relative strength and influence of the party, than upon the merits of the case. At the district courts (Herredsthinget), the influence of the Chief was considerable, but not altogether paramount; many of the more wealthy yeomen could offer him effective resistance: his influence at the superior court (Althinget), depended upon his personal reputation, the power of his friends, and the number of his followers.

The income of the Chief was principally derived from

the tract of land, of which he had taken possession on his arrival; he was also, in most cases, the Hofgode, or priest of the temple; and for the duties of this office, in which providing the altar with offerings was included, he received a small contribution (hoftollr) from every farm in the neighbourhood. To this was afterwards added compensation for journeys to the Althing, and he also received fees from those whose causes he conducted, as well as a small payment from the ships which landed their cargoes on his ground. But all these various sources, did not furnish him with any considerable income, and his land remained his principal means of support. The office was hereditary, as in Norway, but it could also be sold or resigned, and sometimes was lost by being appropriated to the payment of a judicial fine.

Notwithstanding this elevated position of the Chief, it not unfrequently happened that a powerful individual in the province, acquired a higher reputation, and obtained more clients than his superior. Thus after Olaf Paa had returned from his celebrated expedition to Ireland, married the daughter of the powerful Egil Skalagrim, and became possessed of his father-in-law's property, many people flocked around him, and he became a great chief, without being actually a Godordsman, or pontiff.

So long as the colonization continued, the extent of the island secured internal peace; the Landnamsmen, as the first settlers were called, had few disputes amongst themselves, for every one was taken up with his own affairs and although it might sometimes happen, that a quarrelsome individual by single combat (Holmgang*) or the threat of personal encounter, would drive another from his farm, disputes and contests were of rare occurrence. Another

* From *holm*, a small island. So called in consequence of these duels generally taking place upon one of the small neighbouring islands, from whence the combatants could not so easily escape.

local circumstance of no inconsiderable importance as connected with the tranquillity of the country, was the diminutive character of the forests in Iceland. These consisted of dwarf trees, ill suited to ship building, and therefore only small vessels could be built upon the island; whoever wished to trade to Norway, entered into partnership with some Norwegian merchant, or bought a vessel which had been already brought out from the parent state. Such vessels could not, however, be used for piratical expeditions, and those who wished to engage in such adventures, were obliged to join some kindred spirits in Norway who possessed what was called a long ship (Langskip). These difficulties of outfit, connected with the want of sufficient hands for warlike purposes, and the long distance from the coasts, where they were accustomed to carry on their piratical proceedings, was doubtless the cause of so few of the new settlers being concerned in sea-roving, while, in all other matters, they followed the customs of their ancestors.

Thus did this remote and comparatively barren island, give freedom and peace to many of Norway's bravest sons, far from their native land. Instead of participating in the dangers of the perilous voyage, or aiding in the obstinate encounter, or sharing in the lawless spoil, when plunder conferred upon the Sea-king both a fortune and a name, they now sat down peacefully in their tranquil homes, or directed the agricultural labours of their servants and dependants. And now did faithful memory carry them back in imagination to the old and warlike time, whose features appeared the more brilliant when contrasted with the tranquillity of their present pursuits; personal deeds led to the remembrance of those of the father, for it was often in avenging his death, that their prowess had been first called forth, or from his kinsmen or associates that they had received the first assistance. The colonists were, besides, men of high family; the Scandinavians were accustomed to set great weight upon this circumstance; the fewer were

the outward distinctions that characterized the individual, the more important was that prerogative considered which promised magnanimity and valour. The stranger was therefore minutely questioned about his family, and even the peasant girl despised the suitor whose lineage was unknown. In the mother country the remembrance of the old families lived amongst the people of the district; they had travelled together to the national assembly; the paternal barrow, and the antient hall bore testimony to their noble birth,—but of this, nothing save the relation could accompany them to Iceland, and therefore, was the new settler so careful in detailing to his sons and posterity, the history and achievements of their kinsmen in Norway. The son equally tenacious of ancestral fame, failed not to propagate the same minute details amongst his immediate descendants, and thus was insensibly formed, among the Icelanders, connected oral narratives of the families, fortunes, and actions of their ancestors.

These Sagas or traditions, did not generally go further back than the time of the father and grandfather; but the recollections preserved in the songs of the Skalds, were of much older date, and a number of historical songs can be pointed out, which the Icelanders must have brought with them to the new country. Others were historical in a more limited sense, being thrown into rhyme for the occasion, to flatter the vanity of some powerful chief, by a poetical representation of his genealogy; but the more numerous were those in which all the achievements of a hero were specifically enumerated.

These compositions bore little evidence of Brage's*

* Brage, the fourth son of Odin and Frigga, was the Apollo of the Northern Mythology; he chaunted the exploits of the Gods and heroes to the tones of a golden harp, and was represented by the figure of an old man, with a snow-white beard. Runes were said to be upon his tongue, he was rather given to strong drinks, and not very celebrated for courage.—See Manual of Scandinavian Mythology, by Grenville Pigott, p. 90.

favour. Under the jingle of rude rhymes and alliteration, a pictorial expression was given to sword-cuts and slaughter, which brought to remembrance the order in which the several achievements had succeeded each other. The poetical form is more visible in the earlier songs, such as: Hornklove's Ode on Harald Haarfager, particularly his description of the battle of Hafursfjord* than in the later, such as Ottar Svartes Ode on the combats of Olaf the Saint; and those compositions have still more poetical worth, in which, like Eyvind Skialdespilders Ode in praise of the fallen king Hakon Adelsteen, the writers express the feeling which the events call forth.

It may be readily supposed that heroic verses, sung by the Skalds themselves in the courts of heroes, were committed to memory, and that at a time when this was the only means of recording their achievements, such verses would pass orally through many generations. The memory was also sometimes aided by carving the verses in Runic letters† upon a staff. The dying Halmund is introduced in Gretter's Saga, saying to his daughter:—"Thou shalt now listen whilst I relate my deeds, and sing thereof a song, which thou shalt afterwards cut upon a staff." In Egils Saga, also, Thorgerd, addressing her father Egil Skalagrimsen, whose grief for the loss of his son Bödvar, had made him resolve on putting an end to his existence, says:—"I wish, father, that we might live long enough for you to sing a funeral song upon Bödvar, and for me to cut it upon a staff."

* The famous naval engagement in the Bay of Hafursfjord, now called Stavangerfjord, (A. D. 875,) made Harald Haarfager master of the entire kingdom of Norway.

† The word Rune is said to be derived from *ryn* a furrow or channel; the invention is attributed to Odin and his Aser or Gods; the alphabet consists of sixteen letters, which like the Hiberno-Celtic, claims Phœnician origin. See Leitfaden fur Nordischen Alterthumskunde, herausgegeben von der Königlichen Gesellschaft für Nordische Alterthumskunde. Copenhagen 1837, p. 75, et seq. Moore's History of Ireland, Vol. I. p. 54.

Sometimes verses were immediately committed to memory by a number of persons. When King Olaf the Saint drew up his army for the battle of Stikklestad (1030), he directed the Skalds to stand within the circle (Skioldborg), which the bravest men had formed around the king. "Ye shall," said he, "stand here, and see what passes, and thus will ye not require to depend on the Sagas of others for what ye afterwards relate and sing." The Skalds now consulted with each other, and said that it would be fitting to indite some memorial of that which was about to happen, upon which each improvised a strophe, and the historian* adds: "these verses the people immediately learned." In the same manner, much older songs were held in remembrance, and there is still extant in that part of Snorros Edda,† called Kenningar, a fragment of Brage the Skalds ode on Ragnor Lodbrok, by means of which he, in the 7th century, moderated the anger of Bjorn Jernside, against himself. In the same poem are fragments of an old ode on the fall of Rolf Krake, which St. Olaf directed the Skald, Thormod Kolbran, to sing, when the battle of Stikklestad was to commence. The whole army, says the Saga, was

* Snorro Sturleson, in the Heimskringla or History of the Norwegian Kings.

† There are two works which bear the title of EDDA; the one called the Elder Edda in verse, and the other the Younger Edda in prose. The first may be considered a symbolical work on the Scandinavian Mythology, the latter a kind of commentary on the former. The Elder or Poetic Edda was compiled by the eminent Icelander Sæmund, surnamed Frode, or the Learned; the Younger or Prose Edda by Snorro Sturleson. The latter is composed of three parts, namely: 1st. Mythological Fables; 2nd. The Kenningar, being a collection of epithets and metaphors employed by the Skalds, and illustrated by fragments from their compositions, and from the Elder Edda; 3rd. The Scalda, or Poet's Book, containing three treatises; the first being a treatise on the Icelandic characters and alphabets; the second on grammatical, rhetorical, and poetical figures; and the third on prosody. See Pigott's Manual of Scandinavian Mythology, Introduction, p. xlii. et seq.

pleased at hearing this old song, which they called the Soldier's Whetstone, and the king thanked the bard, and gave him a gold ring that weighed half a mark.

But it was more particularly, the Skalds themselves who preserved the older songs in remembrance. By hearing these, their own poetical character had been formed, their memories sharpened; and a knowledge of the past was necessary for the acquisition of those mythic and historical allusions, which were considered indispensable to poetical expression. An instance of their historical knowledge is thus mentioned in the Landnamabok:* when King Harald Haardraade lay with his army in Holland, two large barrows were observed on the edge of the strand, but no one knew who was interred there; however, on the return of the army to Norway, Kare the black, a kinsman of the famous Skald Theodolf af Hvine, was enabled to state that the graves contained the bodies of Snial and Hiald, the two warlike sons of the old Norwegian King Vatnar. This historical knowledge of the Skalds led to their being held in high respect thoughout Scandinavia, and we find them allotted the first place at the courts of Kings. Harald Haarfager is stated to have had more respect for the Skalds, than for all the rest of his courtiers, and, more than a century later, they appear to have been held in equal estima-

* The Landnamabok or Book of the first Norwegian settlers in Iceland, is the most complete national record that has, perhaps, ever been compiled. It contains the names of about 3000 persons, and 1400 places, and forms a minute genealogical register of the colonists, their properties, kinsmen, and descendants, together with short notices of their achievements. The compilation was the work of several authors, beginning with Are, surnamed hinns Frode, or the learned, (b. 1067, d. 1148) continued by Kolsteg, Styrmer, and Thordsen, and ending with Hauk Erlendson, for many years Lagman, or Governor of Iceland, who died A.D. 1334. The Landnamabok is considered the first authority in all matters connected with the early history of the island, and will be often found quoted in the present volume.

tion by the Swedish King, Olaf Skiödkonning, who is stated to have taken great delight in their freedom of speech.

The northern pagan Skalds must not however be looked upon as the Grecian Aonides, whose only province was to sing; they bear a nearer resemblance to the Provençal Knights, were were also Troubadours. The Scandinavian bards were besides of goodly lineage, for only the higher, and more independent conditions of life could call forth Brage's favour; they were also well versed in warlike exercises; the song was the accompaniment to the combat, and we have nearly as many records of their heroic deeds as of their poetical effusions. They were, also, at times, the favourites or confidants of kings, like Theodolf af Hvine, who was the bosom friend of Harald Haarfager, and Flein, to whom the Danish King, Eisteen, gave his daughter in marriage.

Thus were the Skalds well furnished with knowledge of both the present and the past, and, therefore, has the sagacious Snorro Sturleson truly said, in the Preface to his work:*—"The principal foundation is taken from the songs that were sung before the chiefs, or their children, and we hold all that to be true, which is there stated, of their deeds and combats. It was, no doubt, the practice of the Skalds to praise those the most, in whose presence they stood, but no one, even so circumstanced, would venture to tell of actions, which both he, and all those who heard him,

* The Heimskringla, or history o the Kings of Norway, being a complete history of Scandinavia for 300 years. "To this work," says an eloquent and learned writer, "we are indebted for our chief knowledge of those Norman chiefs, whose names made the Kings of Europe tremble in their palaces, and whose descendants now sit on the mightiest of their thrones." Historical and descriptive account of Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe islands (Ed. Cab. Lib. XXVIII. p. 148), a little work, which, with its companion, "Scandinavia," by Drs. Crichton and Wheaton, forms an admirable compendium of northern history.

knew to be false, for that would be an affront, instead of a compliment."

Besides heroic songs, or Drapas, single Strophes were often improvised, not only by Skalds, but by many other individuals, of both sexes, in a critical moment; and these, by being committed to memory, preserved the remembrance of the occasion which called them forth. Like the Orientalists, the Northmen loved to shew their wit by an enigmatical and antithetical mode of speaking, and from thence, the ear having been once accustomed to the simple measure, the transition was easy to the formation of a strophe, by means of alliteration or rhyme.

The means of preserving the recollections of past events, which have been here pointed out, were, for the most part, common both to those who remained in Norway, and those who emigrated to the new country; but in the parent state, the stream of present events, carried away and obscured the recollections of the past. The changes which came upon the whole nation from Harald Haarfager's time, were naturally looked upon by the Norwegians, as more important than the events in which only individual persons or families had been previously concerned. The Icelanders, on the other hand, viewed the one as affecting their home, while the other appeared to be the transactions of a foreign country, and thus the recollections which up to the time of the migration had been preserved in the several detached districts of Norway, were transferred to, and became united in Iceland, as the one settler enumerated to the other, the valorous deeds and achievements of his forefathers.

Besides, it was amongst the families of high birth, that these antient traditions were best preserved. Such families maintained an unbroken succession in Iceland, whereas in Norway they became extinct, first, in consequence of the many events under the immediate successors of Harald Haarfager, and next, from the furious zeal of Olaf in the

propagation of Christianity, which brought ruin to the more tenacious adherents of the old faith, and these were just the individuals, amongst whom the ancient Sagas were best preserved. Not less destructive to the old families was the unfortunate expedition to England and Ireland, under Harald Haardraade and Magnus Barfod, in the 11th century,* as also the long civil wars in the 12th century, which ended with the fall of the Optimists.

The other parts of Scandinavia also produced Skalds, and several, both Danish and Swedish, are mentioned in the antient Sagas; but these countries were of much greater extent, and ruled by much more powerful monarchs, than Norway, previous to the 9th century; and thus did the heroic age terminate, and the songs of the Skalds become silent at an earlier period there than in the neighbouring kingdom.

* "According to our annals," says Moore, "it was not till A.D. 1102, that this prince commenced his operations by a hostile descent upon Dublin;" a pacific arrangement was then entered into, but having been violated, as alleged, by the Irish monarch Murkertach, Magnus invaded the country in the following year, with a fleet of fifteen ships; when being inveigled into an ambuscade by the natives, he was attacked by them in great numbers, his retreat to his ships cut off, and himself killed in the action.—Hist. Ireland, Vol. II. p. 165.

SECOND PERIOD.

We have thus seen how the desire to tell of old times arose and was propagated amongst the inhabitants of the new colony. But the remembrance and relation of individual exploits, and the transmission of these records from one generation to the other, would, perhaps, have never led to the Icelanders becoming historians, had not such habits been united with a strong feeling for poetry, a desire for fame, and that peculiar state of society, which had been formed amongst them.

The island had been colonized in peace; each enterprising navigator, as he touched its shore, took possession of a tract of land, without impediment, and became the independent proprietor of his small estate; but now these settlements approached each other; interests began to clash; individual demeanour to become developed.—The social bonds had been too loosely attached, to keep within due limits the wild self will of so many impetuous Northmen. True, their ancient Norwegian customs had been spontaneously resumed on their arrival, and fifty years later (A. D. 928), the laws of Ulfliot had given a form and consistency to the moral code; but these checks had little weight when individual power or interest were enabled to oppose them. Personal strength was necessary for personal safety; and the many narratives which have been preserved, detailing the untimely fate of the most respectable families, in the course of the first two centuries, exhibit a long list of feuds, and deeds of violence, unchecked by the laws, or the judicial authority of the land.

These civil broils were not, however, in general, of a very sanguinary character, and often consisted of individual encounters, where courage and presence of mind were equally exhibited on both sides, and the contest was obstinate: in a more general fray, the loss was looked upon as considerable, if ten men fell.

The time of feud was also a time of re-union: the object of the individual was spread abroad; discussion was created, sympathy was awakened; the relative merits of the contending parties became the theme of conversation, and the Skalds were stimulated to the composition of new specimens of their inspiring art. On particular occasions they improvised. Hate as well as love formed the theme of these effusions, and the same means were employed to give a graceful form to satire, in which style of composition these antient poets were remarkably successful: in fact, so cutting were these sallies, and of so much weight among a people peculiarly under the influence of public opinion, that they often became the causes of bloodshed, and were looked upon as a ground of complaint before the Courts.* For the most part, however, the songs were of an historical character; sometimes the Skald sang of his own exploits, sometimes of those of his friends, who, upon such occasions, were accustomed to present him with costly gifts: After the Norwegian Skald Eyvind Skialdespilder had sung a Drapa, or ode in praise of the Icelanders, every peasant in the island contributed three pieces of silver, which were

* "As an instance of the effect produced by these satirical songs, it is related that Harold Blaatand, King of Denmark, was so incensed at some severe lines, which the Icelanders had made upon him, for seizing one of their ships, that he sent a fleet to ravage the island, which occurrence led them to make a law, subjecting any one to capital punishment, who should indulge in satire against the Sovereigns of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark!" —Mallet's Northern Antiquities, ap. Iceland, Greenland, &c.—Ed. Cab. Lib. XXVIII. p. 153.

applied to the purchase of a clasp or ornament for a mantel, that weighed 50 marks, and this they sent to the bard, as an acknowledgement of his poetic powers.

The climate and mode of living contributed to keep alive this taste for poetry, which the Icelanders had inherited from their Norwegian ancestors. Agriculture was almost entirely confined to the care of pasture and meadow land; fishing could only be carried on at certain seasons, and the feeding of cattle required little attention. Their hostile proceedings were, also, soon concluded; but was a reprisal apprehended, it became necessary for the chief to retain his followers at the farm, until a reconciliation was brought about, and these assembling in the common room, during the long winter evenings, contributed to increase the social union, and reciprocal communication of past events. Public amusements, also, brought the people frequently together: besides the great feasts, which lasted from eight to fourteen days, sports and games, such as bowls or wrestling, were carried on in the several districts for many weeks in succession; and still more attractive was the Heste-thing, where horses were excited against each other, to the great amusement of both old and young. To these reunions must be added those caused by attendance at the different courts, and particularly at the Althing* or general Assizes, where all the first men of the island met annually, with great pomp and parade. It was looked upon as a disgrace to be absent from this meeting, which was held in the open air on the banks of the Thingvalla Vatn, the largest lake in Iceland, a natural hill or mount forming the court.

* Ting or Thing signifies in the old Scandinavian tongue, *to speak*, and hence a popular assembly, or court of justice. The national assembly of Norway still retains the name of Stor-thing, or great meeting, and is divided into two chambers called the Lag-thing, and Odels-thing.

. . . . . "fast by the barrow
Round whose green sides, shield touching shield,
And sword in hand, the gallant Northmen stood
Rings in each other circling, till they reached
Up to the summit."*

To figure here with a display and retinue that drew upon him the eyes of all beholders, was the great ambition of the Chief, whose power and influence depended much upon the number of friends and followers he could produce on such occasions. These were again determined by the degree of support and assistance, which they could calculate on obtaining from him, in the hour of need; and hence the anxiety on the part of the Icelandic yeoman, to be fully acquainted with the character and circumstances of his chief, to which cause may be more immediately attributed, the interest which he took in all new Sagas or narratives of remarkable individuals.

In the Laxdæla Saga,† it is related that, after a brave Icelander, named Bolle Bolleson, had gallantly defeated an assailant, by whom he had been attacked, in the course of a journey through the island, his exploit became the subject of a new Saga, which quickly spread over the district, and added considerably to his reputation. In Gisle Sursens Saga, a stranger is introduced, saying to his neighbours at the court—"Shew me the men of great deeds, those from whom the Sagas proceed."

The greater number of the remaining Sagas, bear what

*. . . . . uppå ättehögen,
Och kring dess gröna sidor, sköld vid sköld,
Och svärd i handen, stodo Nordens män,
Den ena ringen innan för den andra,
Upp emot toppen!"— Frithiof's Saga, VIII. p. 55.

† The annals of a particular family, as the Eyrbiggia Saga is of a particular district in Iceland. The former has been translated into Latin by Mr. Repp, and Sir Walter Scott has given a brief account of the other.

may be called a political stamp; they contain a detail of the most important disputes between individual families, or districts, painted in the most minute manner, and followed by a general description of the most important personages in the narrative. How much weight was attached to these personal descriptions is shewn by the nature of the Icelandic language, which is richer than any other European tongue in words, that express those various qualities and shades of character which are of the most importance in society. The exterior of the chief person in the Saga is also painted with equal accuracy, especially his features, in which the richness of the language is also observable; and even the particulars of the dress are not omitted. This was of importance in a country where it was not always easy to determine, whether the stranger who made his appearance was friend or foe, and a remarkable instance is mentioned in the Laxdæla Saga of a chief named Helge Hardbeinsen identifying some stranger knights, whom he had never seen, solely from the accurate description of their personal appearance, which was brought to him by the messenger, who communicated the intelligence of their approach.

The same characteristics are imprinted on the Sagas. The peculiarities of the narrator never appear; it is as if one only heard the simple echo of an old tradition; no introductory remarks are made, but the history begins at once abruptly with:—"There was a man called so and so, son of so and so," &c.: no judgment is pronounced upon the transaction, but it is merely added that *this* deed increased the hero's reputation, or *that* was considered bad. In most Sagas the dialogistic form prevails, particularly in those of more antient date, for this form was natural to the people, who insensibly threw their narratives into dialogue, and thus they acquired a more poetical colouring; for not only were the conversations related which had actually taken

place, but also, those which, from the nature of the subject, it might have been concluded had been held; and the general mode of expression being simple, and nearly uniform, and the character being best developed in this definite form, those imaginary conversations were, for the most part, not inconsistent with truth.

The talent for narrating was naturally generated by the desire of hearing these narratives. Those Skalds who remembered the old Sagas, and whose imagination was lively, were best enabled to adopt the dramatic form, and now, independent of their local or political interest, the narratives became interesting on their own account. Scarce a century after the colonization of the country, we find that the people took great pleasure in this amusement. "Is no one come," asks Thorvard, at a meeting of the people mentioned in Viga Glums Saga, "who can amuse us with a new story?" They answered him: "There is always sport and amusement when thou art present." He replied: "I can think of nothing better than Glum's songs," upon which he sung one of those which he had learned. In the Sturlunga Saga, a certain priest, named Ingemund, is mentioned as a man rich in knowledge, who told good stories, afforded much amusement, and indited good songs, for which he obtained payment abroad. Such a narrator was called a Sagaman.

Thus did oral tradition, beginning with the mythic, proceed thence to the historical, and end with the fabulous. We have now come to the period when books were written and collected in the island; but in order to trace the cause of that peculiar fondness for their own history, which led the Icelanders, not only to become the historians of Iceland, but of the whole North, it is necessary to go back to the earlier condition of the country and the people.

It may at first sight appear that the local position of this remote island would be alone sufficient to prevent the in-

habitants from taking any interest in the affairs of other countries; but the communication with Norway continued; the migration from thence lasted for many generations, even after the island was colonized, and many merchant ships passed annually between Iceland and the parent state.* They brought with them meal, building timber, leather, fine cloth, and tapestry, taking in exchange silver, skins, coarse cloth (Vadmel), and other kinds of woollens, as well as dried fish.

As soon as it was known that a merchant had brought a cargo to the Icelandic coast, the chief of the temple, and in later times, the governor of the province, rode down immediately to the ship, and asked for news; he then fixed the price at which the various goods were to be sold to the people of the district, chose what he wanted for himself, and invited the captain of the vessel to stop at his house for the winter. The visitor was now looked upon as one of the family, he entered into their amusements, and disputes, entertained them at Yule with his stories, and presented his host, at parting, with a piece of English tapestry, or some other costly gift, in return for the hospitality which he had received. Piratical expeditions had at this time, given place to trading voyages, and the merchant, or ship's captain was often a person of good family; sometimes attached to the Norwegian Court, and hence well acquainted with all that was passing there. How much this intercourse tended to the increase of historical material is shewn by an old MS.

* Although no mention is made by Bishop Müller of any communication between Iceland and Ireland at this period, it seems yet highly probable that such intercourse did exist, as also between Iceland and the British isles. Mr. Moore, notwithstanding an evident disposition to depreciate the value of Icelandic authorities, admits as a "*known fact*," founded on these very documents, the early settlement of the Irish in Iceland, "to which island," he says, "inaccessible as it might seem to have been to the rude navigation of those days, it is certain that a number of Irish missionaries of the seventh and eighth centuries contrived to find their way."—History of Ireland, Vol. II. p. 3.

of St. Olafs Saga, wherein is stated that:—"In the time of Harald Haarfager, there was much sailing from Norway to Iceland; every summer was news communicated between the two countries, and this was afterwards remembered, and became the subject of narratives."

The Icelanders not only received intelligence from Norway, but brought it away themselves. They were led to undertake these voyages as well from the desire to see their relations, and claim inheritances, as for the purpose of procuring more valuable building timber than the merchant could bring them. The chief considered that his reputation depended much upon the number of persons he could entertain, and for this purpose a spacious hall was required. This formed a separate building, in the midst of which the cheerful wood fire blazed upwards to an aperture in the roof, unchecked by ceilings or partition walls:—

> The drinking hall, a separate house, was built
> Of heart of fir; not twice three hundred men
> Could fill that hall, when gather'd there at Yule.
> * * * * *
> The cheerful faggot on the straw strewn floor
> Unceasing blazed, gladdening its stony hearth,
> While downwards through the dense smoke shot the stars,
> Those heavenly friends, upon the guests below.*

The adventurous stripling, on the other hand, sailed to Norway for the purpose of there engaging in a sea-roving expedition, or seeking advancement amongst his influential kinsmen; and thus many earned renown at the courts of the Norwegian kings, or entered into mercantile pursuits in

* "Dryckesalen, ett hus för sig sjelf, var timrad af kärnfur
Ei femhundrade män (till tio tolfte på hundrat)
Fyllde den rymliga sal, när de samlats att dricka om Julen."
* * * * * *
"Midt på golfvet (med halm var det strödt) brann lågan beständigt,
Gladt på sin murade häll; och igenom det luftiga rökf ång
Blickade stjernorna in, de himmelska vänner, i salen."
Frithiofs Saga, III. p. 18, 19.

order to obtain wealth, or experience and consideration. For the old Northern maxim of "a fool is the home-bred child,"* also held good in Iceland, and therefore do we find Bolle Bollesen saying to his father-in-law Snorro Gode, who wished to dissuade him from going abroad: "Little do I think he knows, who knows no more than Iceland." Trading was often undertaken by young men solely as the means of acquiring knowledge, which being accomplished, the pursuit was given up.

After the lapse of a few centuries, this passion for travelling was increased by a new cause, which had more immediate influence upon the collection of historical materials. The Skalds passed over to England, the Orkneys, and the Norwegian courts, seeking rewards and reputation. They neither required the aid of friends or money for such expeditions, but boldly entering the drinking hall of the kings, craved permission to sing a drapa in praise of the monarch, which was always granted, and the bard received handsome presents, such as weapons, clothes, gold rings, together with an honourable reception at the court, in return for his exertions.

The Icelandic Skalds, favoured by the independent position of their country, and a superior knowledge of the Scandinavian mythology, acquired a marked pre-eminence over their competitors in other parts of the North. The praises of a stranger bard, from a free country, were more flattering to a king or chieftain than the more servile adulation of his own laureate; and it was but reasonable, as well as politic, to reward him well who had come from so great a distance, and who, travelling from land to land, could sound the king's praise, and tell of the royal bounty. The odes thus sung, were all of an historical character; and it was, therefore, necessary for the Skald to be well acquainted with the deeds of the monarch and his ancestors.

* "Heimskr er heimalit barn."

It was also required of him that he should be able to repeat the national ballads; and the extraordinary power of the Skalds in this particular, is shewn in the saga of the blind Skald Stuf, who, one evening, sung sixty songs before Harald Haardraade, and could repeat four times as many longer poems!

But if a knowledge of history was of importance to the Skald, it was absolutely indispensable to the Sagaman. A remarkable anecdote of one of these narrators, is contained in the Saga of Thorstein Frode, preserved in the Arne-Magnæan collection of Icelandic MSS.:* a certain Sagaman, called Thorstein, repaired to King Harald, to Norway. The king asked him "whether he knew anything that would amuse." He replied, that he knew a few sagas. "I will receive thee," said the king, "and thou shalt entertain whoever requires it of thee." Thorstein became favoured by the courtiers, and obtained clothes from them: the king also gave him a good sword.

* Arnas Magnussen, a learned Icelander and ardent patriot, devoted his time, talents, and fortune to the national literature of his country. Filling the situation of Professor of Northern Antiquaries at the University of Copenhagen, in the beginning of the 18th century, he amassed the largest collection of books and manuscripts that has, perhaps, ever been brought together by one individual. Amongst these are the rarest and most ancient vellum MSS. in the old northern tongue, relating to the history, laws, manners, and customs of the ancient Scandinavians. The great fire of Copenhagen, in 1728, robbed the devoted antiquary of many of these often dearly-purchased treasures; but he recommenced his labours with undiminished zeal, and although then in his 65th year, was enabled to leave to his country, at his death (A.D. 1730), nearly 2000 Icelandic MSS., together with a fund of 10,000 rix dollars for their publication. Little progress was made towards carrying the testator's wishes into effect until a commission, called the Arne-Magnæan commission, was instituted by the King of Denmark, in 1772, soon after which the publication commenced, and all the most important MSS. have been given to the public by this society. The collection is called the Arne-Magnæan collection, and is preserved in the University Library of Copenhagen.] See Biographiske Efterretninger om Arne-Magnussen, af E. C. Werlauf ap. Nord. Tid. f. Oldk. 1 B. 1 H. Kjöbenhavn, 1835.

Towards Yule* he became sorrowful; the king guessed the cause, namely, that his Sagas were at an end, and that he had nothing for Yule. He answered, that so it was; he had one remaining, and that he durst not tell, for it was about the king's journeys. The king said that he should begin with that the first day of Yule, and he (the king) would take care that it should last to the end of the festival. The thirteenth day, Thorstein's Saga came to an end, and now he looked anxiously for the judgment of the king, who said, smiling: "It is not the worse told because thou hast a talent therefor, but where didst thou get it?" Thorstein answered: "It is my custom to repair every summer to the Althing in our land, and there I learn the sagas which Haldor Snorreson relates." The king said: "then it is no wonder thou knowest them so well," and upon this, gave him a good ship load; and now Thorstein passed often between Norway and Iceland.

To comprehend how such a narrative could have lasted thirteen days, we must presume that the dialogistic form was freely used, and that the story was interrupted and decorated with verses and poetical allusions to a considerable extent. The anecdote also shews that while Sagamen

* Yule was a pagan festival, celebrated in honour of Thor, at the beginning of February, when the Northmen's year commenced, and they offered sacrifices for peace and fruitful seasons to this deity, who presided over the air, launched the thunder, and guarded mankind from giants and genii: it lasted 14 days. Etymologists differ as to the derivation of the name, but the most probable seems to be the supposition that it was so called from *Jolner*, one of the many names for Odin, the father of Thor. After the introduction of Christianity, the anniversary of Yule was transferred to Christmas, which is still called by that name throughout Scandinavia. The word Yule is also used in many parts of Scotland to denote the same festive period, shewing the early connection of the Caledonians with their more northern neighbours, and tending to confirm the conjecture of Tacitus, as well as the accounts of ancient English chroniclers, that the Picts were of northern descent, or as Moore expressively says, "from the same hive of northern adventurers, who were then pouring forth their predatory swarms over Europe."—Hist. Ireland, vol. i. p. 99.

were of later origin than Skalds, they also stood in lower estimation: the Skald was enrolled amongst the courtiers; the Sagaman was only looked upon as an amusing visitor.

In the 11th century, the Icelanders ceased to engage in piratical expeditions; the chiefs, whose power and riches had increased, looked with contempt on trading voyages; but on the other hand, it was often a result of their feuds, that one of the parties was obliged to leave the country for a few years. Sometimes also they engaged in a voluntary pilgrimage to Rome. Such an expedition went first to Denmark, where it was always well received by the Danish kings, and more particularly in the 13th century, we find the Icelandic chiefs drawing forth expressions of respect and esteem at the court of Valdemar II.

All these travellers were sure to return home after a few years, and establish themselves in Iceland, nor could the most flattering reception at foreign courts abate their inherent love of country. Thus King Harald Gormsen could not prevail upon Gunnar of Hlidarende to remain at his court, although he held out the temptations of a wife and fortune; and hence says Hakon to Finboge Ramme, "That is just the way with you Icelanders! the moment you are valued and favoured by princes, you want to get away." When the travelled man came home, he was received with the greatest attention; he was instantly sought out at the Althing, and now he must make a public statement of his travels and adventures. The curiosity of Icelanders is proverbial, and seems to be in proportion to their distance from the continent. If a ship arrived, the people instantly ran down to the shore to ask for news, unless the chief of the district (Herredsforstanderen) had ruled that he should be the first. Thorstein Ingemundson, a hospitable man, who lived in the 10th century, looked upon it as the duty of every stranger to visit him first: and he was once highly exasperated with some strangers, who neglected this cour-

tesy. When Kiartan, mentioned in the history of Olaf Tryggveson, had returned from Norway, and was grieving over the infidelity of his betrothed, his father was most distressed at the people thus losing the benefit of his stories; and when he was afterwards married, and a splendid wedding took place on the island, nothing amused the guests more than the bridegroom's narratives of his services under the great King Olaf Tryggveson. However desirous the new comer might be to learn what had happened during his absence from home, he was always first obliged to tell his countrymen the news from abroad. A remarkable illustration of this is given in the life of Bishop Magnus, who returned from Saxony by Norway (A.D. 1135), just as the people were assembled at the Althing, and were loudly contending upon a matter, respecting which no unanimity could be obtained. A messenger suddenly appears among the crowd, and states that the Bishop is riding up. Upon this they all become so pleased that they instantly leave the court, and the Bishop is obliged to parade on a height near the church, and tell all the people what had happened in Norway whilst he was abroad!

Such a narrative, told by a person of veracity, went from mouth to mouth, under the name of the first narrator, which was looked upon as a security for the truth of the Saga.

THIRD PERIOD.

It has thus been shewn how the materials for history had been collected in Iceland, and how these materials were moulded into the form of narrative by oral tradition: it now remains to be seen how the traditions became the subjects of written documents, and historical literature assumed a definite and permanent form.

Snorro Sturleson says in the preface to the Heimskringla, that Are Frode (b. 1067, d. 1148) was the first who committed to writing, in the northern tongue, historical narrations both of the present and the past. Soon afterwards Sæmund Frode wrote of the Norwegian kings. Both these authors finished their works at a late period of life, and after the year 1120: hence it has been inferred that no history was written in Iceland before the time of Are Frode, and consequently that such historical writing was the fruit of a taste for literature generated by the introduction of Christianity.

This important event occurred in the year 1000. New ideas and new writings were now, doubtless, introduced, but a considerable time must have elapsed before these civilizing effects became general. Christianity was not propagated in Iceland by force, but was the result of the example of the mother country, the adhesion of individual chiefs to the new religion, and the indifference of many to the old. No violent persecution was awakened against the followers of the old idolatry, nor was the influence of the new religion upon morals and customs very visible at first. Sixteen years had elapsed from the introduction of Christianity, before an injunction from Olaf the Saint, forbad the Icelanders to expose their children, and eat

horse-flesh. The first Bishop (Isleif) was consecrated in 1056, but the influence of the priestly character depended, like that of the Hofgode in former times, on his personal qualities, and the power of his kinsmen. The oligarchy checked the growth and influence of the hierarchy. Even in the beginning of the 13th century, interdicts were little attended to, and we find the Archbishop of Trondhjem so late as A.D. 1213, obliged to shew great indulgence to the chiefs, who had cruelly maltreated Bishop Judmund Aresen. With Christian worship came also frankincense, clerical robes, bells and books. Previous to this, the Icelanders were only acquainted with Runes, Runic stones, and Staves, and such small articles, upon which single words or sentences were inscribed. Individuals may, doubtless, have met with books, upon or near the island, just as Irish books were found there by the first settlers,* but so long as Roman letters and the language in which they were written were unknown, such books could only have been looked upon as foreign novelties. Now the priests brought Latin breviaries, and the new alphabet could not be found very difficult after the use of Runes. Fifty years after the introduction of Christianity, Bishop Isleif established the first school, which was soon followed by many others. The previous state of society had awakened a greater taste for reading and knowledge in Iceland, than in the rest of the North, and the tranquil habits of the people being favourable to the cultivation of letters, it was not long before many of them applied themselves ardently to literature. The Kristni Saga relates that towards the end of the 11th century, there were many chiefs so learned that they might have been priests, and many were actually appointed to the sacred office. In the beginning of the 12th century, Ovid's Epistles and *Amores* were read in the schools, and in the course of the

* See Minor Narratives, Part III.

same century, we find mention made of many who possessed collections of books.

For some time reading and literature were closely connected with the new religion. A knowledge of Latin letters was acquired in order to sing the Psalter, to which, without well understanding it, some magical influence was ascribed,* and the young priest applied himself to Latin, in order that he might becomingly celebrate the Mass. For records of daily life, the Icelander needed not the foreign character; his Runes afforded him a readier medium, and their use was continued for a long period. On the other hand an acquaintance with the Latin language became of the greatest importance to his whole being; for thus an inexhaustible source of knowledge had been opened to him, and the travelling Icelander could now, in foreign schools, become endowed with all the learning of the age, and by means of Latin books, transfer this learning to his own country. Of these, the historical were the most congenial to his taste and habits, and the annalistic form was best suited to retain the fruits of his reading: hence came Icelanders to copy, and afterwards to compile annals embracing long periods of time, and hence to treat Northern history in the same simple manner.

But peculiar difficulties presented themselves to the correct arrangement of these records. Much as had been related in Iceland of the events of the past, their chronological order was not preserved, and the only guide to this indispensable element of history, were the long genealogical details of the individuals whose actions were recorded. To ascribe these different events to particular years, and arrange them in chronological order, required much time, trouble and investigation, yet under all these difficulties a

* How many modern Christians repeat the Psalmodic responses with kindred ignorance and superstition!

book was completed, which must excite the surprise and admiration of all the modern literati.

This book was written by Are Frode, under the title of Book of the Icelanders (Islendingabok) and contained a dry and condensed, but at the same time, well arranged and comprehensive view of the most important events in the history of the country. It has often been regretted that a larger work by the same author has been lost. The former, with good reason, was highly prized, for it laid the foundation of all northern history, determining many important epochs, and shewing their connexion and succession with minor events. But Snorro's expression about Are Frode has been misunderstood, when he is made to say that Are was the first Icelander, who wrote anything historical. Snorro says that Are was the first Icelander, who was *a historian*, but by this he could not mean to say that no one had ever put a Saga upon paper before Are Frode; for this, after Icelanders had been educated in schools, could not be well maintained.

The preceding shows that a number of narratives, thrown into an agreeable form, were current throughout Iceland, and that these, favoured by a free constitution, were increased by all the remarkable events that took place either in the island, or the neighbouring kingdoms. The transition to written documents was now easy and natural: he who was accustomed to read and write, and who, perhaps, relied less upon his memory than others, was readily led to take down in writing that which he was desirous to retain, and thus he constructed a Saga. But the writer of such a Saga would never think of appending his name to it, and thereby seeking the honours of authorship, for he merely wrote down what he had heard others say, and exactly as he had heard it. Hence are the greater number of Icelandic Sagas anonymous; the date must be determined by the contents, and it is very possible that many of these narratives, such as Vigastyrs and Heidarviga Saga were written

earlier than the *Schedæ* of Are Frode. The other principal Icelandic historian was Are's friend, Sæmund, also surnamed Frode, or the learned, whose work on the Norwegian kings, from Harald Haarfager to Magnus the Good, is now lost: it is quoted less frequently than that of Are, the most important events having, probably, been already determined by him.

The peculiar nature of the settlement, and the circumstances under which it had been formed, directed the attention of the Icelandic historians of the 12th century, more particularly to details connected with the colonization of the island: the order in which families had become established, their genealogy, territory, how they were allied, &c.; and the fruit of these enquiries was the celebrated Landnamabok. Next to these local matters, came the reigns of the two Olafs, of whose achievements many narratives were in circulation, and whose zeal in the propagation of Christianity caused them to be surrounded with a sacred halo. The life of Olaf Tryggveson was written in Latin by two monks, named Gunlaug and Odd, who gave as authorities the oral relations of men from the middle of the same century, at the end of which they wrote;* their labour consisted in little more than translating into Latin, and accompanying with a few remarks, that which had been communicated to them by others, for both these notices of Olaf's life shew that neither of the authors related anything on his own personal knowledge. About the same period a diffuse compilation was made, recording the achievements of St. Olaf during his life, and his miracles after his death; this was afterwards employed by Snorro, and his contemporary Styrmer, but the nature of both these works renders it probable that many parts had been already written in detached narratives before the whole was collected.

These lives of the Olafs are, in all probability, the earliest

* The 12th century.

regularly arranged written records of a narrative which had been orally related, and they form a connecting link between historical writing and tradition. The achievements of Harald Haarfager, also, which are mentioned in so many narratives of the Icelandic colonists, as having been sung by so many Skalds, whose songs were remembered, and which, besides, contained events of such great general importance to the Icelanders,—were no doubt committed to writing in the course of the 12th century.

From such lives of individual kings, the Sagas of the Kings of Norway could easily be compiled, for just as the isolated deeds of an Icelander were put together to form the history of his life, and thereto were added the achievements of his forefathers and children, so by uniting the lives of Harald Haarfager and the two Olafs, a Saga of Norwegian Kings was already formed. But he who collected or transcribed such a history in the 12th century, never thought of writing a book, still less of being looked upon as an author; he wrote either because he wished to note down certain events, for his own satisfaction, or in order to have a good collection of entertaining narratives to relate to his friends. The first attempts were naturally imperfect and unequal, for the materials were casually collected, and the most disproportionate brevity and prolixity is to be observed amongst them; but these became better after a time, and only the most deserving were eventually transcribed.

Next to the Olafs, Harald Haardraade was the Norwegian King who furnished the richest materials to the historian, and already during his life time, and with his cognizance, a romantic complimentary Saga, of his residence at Constantinople, founded upon Haldor Snorroson's prolix narrative, was in circulation. There was another class of Saga which must have led the admirers of the bardic art to collect them into a united form; namely, the celebrated mythic Sagas of the Volsunger and Giukunger, whose deeds

formed the theme of the oldest songs of the Skalds, and from whence so many poetical images are taken. No Icelander who either ventured to indite a strophe himself, or made any pretensions to poetic taste, could be ignorant of these. The Volsunga Saga is supposed to have been written either at the end of the 12th or beginning of the 13th century.

That the Icelanders who thus, in the 12th century, committed to paper for their own information, the achievements of foreign kings, were not unmindful of the transactions of their own island, may be easily believed; nor did they fail to note down carefully the concerns of their own families and the valorous deeds of their kinsmen and forefathers. But of these narratives, there was scarcely one that could be properly called a book, that is to say, a work published for the information of others; they could only be looked upon as records for personal use, or echos of the living narrative and assistants to its propagation.

The first real writers of history that Iceland produced—those, namely, who collected historical materials, which they individually worked out with the view of communicating the knowledge of remarkable events to their fellow men, were those who wrote the history of their own times. The first of these was Erik Oddson, who, according to Snorro, wrote from the testimony of eye-witnesses, and from what he himself had learned from Harald Gille and his sons in the middle of the 12th century. This book is used by Snorro, and still more literally by the author of the MS. Morkinskinna. Next to him comes Carl Johnson, who was Abbot of Thingöre Monastery in 1169, and wrote the first part of the history of King Sverre, under the personal inspection of the monarch himself: the succeeding part was finished by Styrmer, in the first half of the 13th century. These authors followed exactly the historical style which had been formed by oral relation. The circumstance of King Sverre,

who carefully employed every means of leading public opinion in his favour, having sought to influence the Abbot, while writing his history, proves that already at that time a feeling for literature had been awakened.

Thus in the 12th century, when the night of ignorance and barbarism still hung over the rest of Europe, narratives which had previously been transmitted by oral tradition, were taken down with the pen, and the writing of books was commenced in Iceland. The following century was the golden age of Icelandic historical literature, for in that age lived Snorro Sturleson.* His mode of writing history was to collect the Sagas that had been written before his time, to strike out whatever displeased him, make abstracts of what he considered too diffuse, and enliven the recital by the introduction of a few strophes from the old Skalds. He states nothing for which he has not good authority; he rejects whatever was too trifling to be consistent with the dignity of history, as well as the greater part of those legends which several of the copyists have inserted in his work: but, on the other hand, he does not pass by a single

* Son of the wealthy and powerful Chief Sturle Thordson, and Lagman or governor of Iceland in 1213. "His countrymen," says an eloquent writer, "love to compare him with the most celebrated of the Roman orators, to whom both in character and fortune he bore a striking resemblance. Both were called to the highest offices in their native land by the voice of their admiring countrymen—both amidst the cares and distractions of political life, soothed their labours by literature, and won its brightest honors from their less busy contemporaries,—both lived at a time when the bulwarks of freedom were crumbling into fragments around them, —and both, taking an active share in the unnatural conflict, fell victims to the success of their enemies. Like Cicero, too, Snorro was distinguished for his powerful, fervid eloquence, and by his rank, wealth and talents, was entitled to the highest place in the state. But his character was stained by avarice and ambition, and he is accused of having often failed to perform boldly what he had prudently contrived." Iceland, Greenland, &c. Ed. Cab. Lib. xxviii. pp. 135-6.

illustrative feature, and has faithfully preserved the lively character of the antient Saga.

Between 1264 and 1271, being some years after Sverres Saga had been completed, Sturle Thordson wrote the history of Hakon Hakonson, at the instigation of Magnus Lagebæter, and according to the materials which he had collected at the Norwegian court. His work is therefore to be looked upon as an independent performance, and both as regards its comprehensiveness and historical arrangement, must be classed amongst the best of the Icelandic historical works.

The Sagas which embrace that period of time, extending from the death of Sverre to the birth of Hakon Hakonson, are probably written later than Hakon Hakonson's Saga, for as they just fill up the space between these two great historical works, the want of this link would not clearly appear, until the latter had been completed. The fragment which remains of Magnus Lagebæter's Saga, shews that it was intended to continue the series of Royal Narratives, but these could scarcely have been of much interest, as no MSS. are extant.

A Jarls Saga was also compiled in the 13th century, being a collection of antient Narratives relating to the Jarls of the Orkneys, which were united and continued under the name of the Orkneyinga Saga. The civil disturbances in Iceland at this period, were described by Sturle Thordson, and beside this many were employed in writing Annals.

In the 16th century, although the decline of learning had commenced, much literary activity was still visible in Iceland; but the independent compilation or composition of history had ceased, and only a few Bishops Sagas were still written. On the other hand copying was carried on with great industry, older Sagas were transcribed, the

Landnamabook completed, and the Kristnisaga, or description of the introduction of Christianity into the country, was extracted from the older writings: the copious MSS. called Flatöbogen,* still shews with what industry individual ecclesiastics collected and transcribed the older historical Sagas, towards the end of this century.

LAST PERIOD.

We have now seen how Icelandic historical literature, after having blossomed and borne good fruit, began at last to wither and decay; and the cause of its origin and bloom, leads us also to the cause of its decline and extinction. The old state of society had called forth individual action and heroic deeds, and awakened a feeling for their representation; but now the power of the petty chief over his Thingmen had become diminished, and the equilibrium had been removed from amongst the chieftains themselves. Already in the beginning of the 11th century had Gudmund the Powerful one hundred servants at his farm, and he was accustomed to travel through his district like a petty king, with a retinue of thirty men, to judge the disputes of his Thingmen. He did not, however, venture to combat the general dissatisfaction, caused by the increased expense to the individuals where he lodged, which this practice occa-

* The book of Flat island (Codex Flatevensis) so called from having been found in a monastery on the island of Flatö (Flat island) situated north of the Breida Fjord in Iceland. It is a vellum MS. containing copies of a number of Sagas, executed between 1387 and 1395, and is preserved in the Royal Library of Copenhagen.

sioned, and eventually contented himself with six attendants. As long as public opinion had so much weight, the voice of the Saga was also influential, but when powerful families intermarried, their influence invariably increased, as well as the number of their followers and constituents. In the beginning of the 12th century Haflide Marson had a dispute with Thorgill Oddeson, and rode to the Thing with 1200 men, while 700 accompanied his antagonist. No individual yeoman could oppose such an armament, either with his own force or that of his kinsmen, and the field of domestic narrative was therefore reduced from the multiplicity of characters and events which the time of the colonists brought forth, to the more serious feuds of a few powerful chiefs.

From the middle of the 12th century, all power and influence was divided between the three warlike sons of Sturle—the historian Snorro, Thord, and Sighvat. Avarice, ambition, and revenge generated implacable hatred between these, and brought on the destruction of their race; and the history of the independent age of Iceland may be said to end with the feuds of this family, which lasted one hundred years, and gave to that period the name of "the time of the Sturlungers" (Sturlungatiden). Although the history of this period has been written in a good style, with the greatest accuracy, and rare impartiality by an eye-witness and participator in the events—Sturle Thordson; notwithstanding the much more important occurrences which are here narrated, as compared with the former periods, and which, it might therefore be supposed, would awaken greater interest,—the Sturlunga Saga does not present that attraction to the reader, which is afforded by the narratives of less important periods.

Mere numerical force, and not the personal strength or ability of the individual now determined the result. The question was no longer about defending a cause at the

Court, but assembling an army; the old thirst for revenge had not vanished, but honourable feeling had given place to treachery, and the power of numbers. No distinguished individual appeared whose deeds could awaken sympathy. Snorro Sturleson was talented and eloquent, but at the same time, ambitious, avaricious, and not very celebrated for his personal prowess; his nephew, Sturle Sighvatson, was full of energy, but imperious, violent, and faithless; Kolbein the younger, and Gissur, authors of Snorro's murder, were only clever partisans; Thord Kakal, who revenged the fall of the Sturlungers, awakened more sympathy, but he did not possess energy enough either to overcome his enemies, or sincerity enough to be reconciled to them, and hastened the submission of the island to Norway.*

The submission of the Icelanders to the sway of the Norwegian Kings was a natural consequence of these domestic dissensions; there was no end to the wars of the chiefs; not a single house, as formerly, was burned down, but whole provinces were laid waste. The chiefs themselves, also, looked to Norway for assistance as well as to their bishops, who were dependant on the see of Throndhjem; Hakon Hakonson well knew how to avail himself of this internal weakness, and hastening on a crisis, which was the necessary consequence of the natural course of events, secured the allegiance of the island in 1261.

Thus did all the noble sentiments, generated by equal laws, an independent position, high descent, and intellectual endowment, sink beneath the angry and narrow-minded conflicts of private interest and personal animosity. Party feeling,—that curse of a nation,—fell upon the land; the Norwegian monarch, availing himself of the weakness which ever accompanies disunion, accomplished the sub-

* For a short account of Snorro's death, and the feuds of the Sturlungers, see Iceland, Greenland, &c.—Ed. Cab. Lib. xxviii, p. 134, et seq.

jection of the island, and as in a more southern and greener isle, the intestine dissensions of her own excited sons, affixed the badge of vassalage upon Iceland!

What theme could now animate the lyric muse, or give interest and distinction to the annals of the historian? The flame of discord lighted by the chiefs, and fanned into destructive extension by the Norwegian King, had carried with it, the last spark of freedom from the exhausted land, and with freedom fled the spirit which had breathed life into the songs of the Skalds, and given force and character to the records of the Saga!

After a short time the Sagas ceased to be produced, for nothing occurred that was worthy of being committed to writing; the dry annalist alone could fill his note book with the successions of Lagmen or chief magistrates, the weddings of the chiefs, law suits, and solitary deeds of violence, the remnant of the old licentiousness; or more destructive still, with details of the ravages of the pestilential diseases, which now spread death and desolation throughout the land.

But even more injurious to the historical literature of Iceland than these depopulating effects was the taste for romance which arose about this period, and weakened the feeling for pure history. We have already seen that in the 12th century, fabulous or poetical ornament was given to historical narrative, in order to increase the gratification of the hearer; and by such embellished adventures Sturle Thordson obtained so much favour with Magnus Lagebæter; but so long as real acts of heroism were performed, and recorded, and the Sagas were connected with the songs of the Skalds, and the genealogy of families, such narratives justly attained the preference; it was otherwise, however, when the public interest in domestic events had subsided, or rather when the altered condition of society produced nothing to call it forth, and the romances of chivalry, were

opened like a new world, before the admiring eyes of the Icelanders. This was particularly apparent in the reign of Hakon Hakonson, by whose orders several of the most popular foreign romances were translated into Icelandic. To these may be added the copious Vilkina Saga, a romance of Didrik of Bern and his champions, which was, probably, written by Icelanders in Bergen, in the 14th century, from the narratives of Hanseatic merchants.

The passion for hearing and reading foreign romances injured historical literature in two ways: first, by corrupting the pure taste for true history; and secondly, by leading many to exaggerate, and deck out facts with imaginative features borrowed from these fables. Public interest in the history of the neighbouring countries also ceased to be longer entertained; some considerable properties fell to the Norwegian crown; the riches of the chiefs passed away, and the island sunk fast into an abject and unimportant condition. Journies to foreign courts, and consequently the knowledge of foreign events became more rare; the complimentary verses of the subject poet to his monarch were naturally less valued than those sung by the travelling bard in honour of a stranger king; they were no longer liberally rewarded, and soon both Skald and Sagaman ceased to sing and to narrate. With good reason, therefore, does Torfæus observe that Hakon Hakonson, by subjecting Iceland, left a larger kingdom to his successors, but at the same time, diminished their glory by depriving them of the men who could have immortalized their name.

In the 14th and 15th centuries the voyages of the Icelanders altogether ceased. The stranger who landed on their coast, unlike the old skipper of wide experience and goodly lineage and connexion, was now the paltry trader or ordinary seaman from whom little could be learned; and if an Icelander went abroad, he found himself a stranger in Scandinavia. In the course of the 13th century, the old

language, by mixture with the German, and a careless manner of speaking, had become quite altered in Denmark, and the same change appeared in the following century in Norway, these two languages becoming nearly similar; so that the old *Danske Tunge*, together with the Saga, was no longer heard in Scandinavia, while in remote Iceland, the ancient songs of the Skalds, and stories of the Sagamen, secured its preservation there.

Thus separated from the rest of the world, as well by language as locality, the Icelanders could only gratify their taste for reading in the books of their own country. The value of oral tradition, and therewith its power had gradually diminished and died away as books and reading became more general; but the old supply of true and poetical narratives became corrupted by legends of foreign and native saints, adventures with ghosts and spirits, and traditions from foreign romances, which were written in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. Meantime the feeling for the old Saga was still kept alive by historical songs (Rimar) and the labours of the genealogist; the latter has been a favourite pursuit with Icelanders in all ages, and by these means have the principal families been enabled to trace their descent from the 10th and 11th centuries, with far greater accuracy than the most ancient nobility of the rest of Europe. The Rimar had much resemblance to the Champion songs (Kæmpe viser), traces of which are to be found in the Sturlunga Saga, and which were composed in great numbers in the following century. Of the seventy-eight Icelandic poets that are enumerated by Einarm, as having flourished from the Reformation to the end of the 18th century, the greater number have composed such rhymes, and in many of these the old traditions are included.

In the 16th century still fewer Sagas were written than in the 15th, not so much because people began to get

acquainted with printed works, which took place slowly, but because the Reformation at first operated against the reading of Sagas: they were said to contain Popery.

It was, therefore, fortunate for history that from the 17th century the attention of the literati, both in Sweden and Denmark, was turned to the importance of Icelandic manuscripts. Arngrim Johnson, author of Crymogæa, assisted by King Christian IV. of Denmark (1643), collected several of them, and Bishop Brynjulf Svendson sent some of the most important Icelandic codices to Frederic III. (1670), who was a zealous promoter of all intellectual advancement. The Icelander Rugman who, taken prisoner in the wars of Charles X. of Sweden, had awakened the attention of the Swedish literati to the literary treasures of his own country, was sent to the island in 1661 to purchase manuscripts for the Antiquarian Museum of Stockholm, and many were afterwards sent thither on the same errand; but Christian V. of Denmark, whose dominion, including Norway, extended to Iceland, issued a prohibition in 1685 against any manuscripts being disposed of to strangers, nor was it until the eminent antiquary Professor Arnas Magnussen was placed at the head of a royal commission in Iceland, which carried on its labours with unwearied assiduity from 1702 to 1712, that the remaining manuscripts were collected and lodged in the libraries of Copenhagen.

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

BY THE NORTHMEN.

Saga of Erik the Red.

The first important document that appears in Professor Rafn's collection, is the Saga or narrative of Erik the Red, the first settler in Greenland. This manuscript forms part of the celebrated Flatö-bogen, or Codex Flateyensis,* and the language, construction, and style of the narrative, together with other unerring indications, prove it to have been written in the 12th century. A facsimile of this, as well as of the other principal manuscripts, is appended to the Antiquitates Americanæ.

Although the main object of the writer of this narrative appears to have been to enumerate the deeds and adventures of Erik and his sons, short accounts are also given of the discoveries of succeeding voyagers, the most distinguished of whom was Thorfinn Karlsefne; but as a more detailed narrative of the discoveries of this remarkable personage, is contained in the manuscript entitled the Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne, which is also translated, the following selections are principally confined to the voyages of Erik and his immediate followers.

* See Introduction, page xxxvii.

Saga of Erik the Red.

DISCOVERY AND COLONIZATION OF GREENLAND.

A. D. 985.

Thorvald hight a man, a son of Osvald, a son of Ulf-Oxne-Thorersson. Thorvald and his son Erik the Red removed from Jæder* to Iceland, in consequence of murder. At that time was Iceland colonized wide around.† They lived at Drange on Hornstrand; there died Thorvald. Erik then married Thorhild, the daughter of Jærunda and Thorbjorg Knarrarbringa, who afterwards married Thorbjorn of Haukadal.

Then went Erik northwards, and lived at Erikstad near Vatshorn. The son of Erik and Thorhild hight Leif. But after Eyulf Soers and Rafn the duellists‡ murder, was Erik banished from Haukadal, and he removed westwards to Breidafjord, and lived at Oexney at Erikstad. He lent

* S. W. coast of Norway.

† Iceland was colonized by Ingolf, a Norwegian, in 874. The discovery of the island has been erroneously given to Nadodd in 862, but Finn Magnusen and Rafn have shewn that it had been previously visited by Gardar, a Dane of Swedish descent about the year 860, and was first called Gardarsholm (Gardar's island), nor can the arrival of Nadodd, who called it Sneeland (Snowland) be fixed at an earlier period than 864. See Grönland's Historiske Mindesmærker, Vol. I. p. 92-97. But both the Norwegian and Swedo-Dane must give place to the Irish monks, who, it will be shewn, visited and resided in Iceland *sixty-five years* before the discovery of Gardar. See Minor Narratives, Part III. of this volume.

‡ Holmgang Rafn. See Introduction, p. vi.

Thorgest his seat-posts,* and could not get them back again; he then demanded them; upon this arose disputes and frays between him and Thorgest, as is told in Eriks saga.† Styr Thorgrimson, Eyulf of Svinoe, and the sons of Brand of Alptafjord, and Thorbjörn Vifilson assisted Erik in this matter, but the sons of Thorgeller and Thorgeir of Hitardal stood by the Thorgestlingers. Erik was declared outlawed by the Thorsnesthing,‡ and he then made ready his ship in Erik's creek, and when he was ready, Styr and the others followed him out past the islands. Erik told them that he intended to go in search of the land, which Ulf Krages son Gunnbjörn saw, when he was driven out to the westward in the sea, the time when he found the rocks of Gunnbjörn.§ He said he would come back to his friends if he found the land. Erik sailed out from Snæfellsjökul‖; he found land, and came in from the sea to the place which he called Midjökul; it is now hight Blaserkr. He then went southwards to see whether it was there habitable land. The first winter he was at Eriksey, nearly in the middle of the eastern settlement¶; the spring after repaired he to Eriksfjord, and took up there his abode. He removed in summer

* Setstokka. See Introduc. p. iii. note.

† Supposed to be a lost Icelandic MS.

‡ Court. See Introduc. p. xvii. note.

§ Gunnbjarnasker, stated by Bjorn Johnson to have been about midway between Iceland and Greenland, but now concealed, or rendered inaccessible by the descent of Arctic ice, Antiq. Am. p. xi. note a.

‖ Jökul is used to describe a mountain of snow or ice (glacier) from *Jaki*, a fragment of ice.

¶ Eystribygd.

to the western settlement, and gave to many places names. He was the second winter at Holm in Hrafnsgnipa, but the third summer went he to Iceland, and came with his ship into Breidafjord. He called the land which he had found Greenland, because, quoth he, "people will be attracted thither, if the land has a good name." Erik was in Iceland for the winter, but the summer after, went he to colonize the land; he dwelt at Brattahlid in Eriksfjord. Informed people say that the same summer Erik the Red went to colonize Greenland, thirty-five ships sailed from Breidafjord and Borgafjord, but only fourteen arrived; some were driven back, and others were lost. This was fifteen winters before Christianity was established by law in Iceland. The following men who went out with Erik, took land in Greenland: Herjulf took Herjulfsfjord (he lived at Herjulfsness) Ketil Ketilsfjord, Rafn Rafnsfjord, Sœlve Sœlvedal, Helge Thorbrandsson Alptefjord, Thorbjornglora Siglefjord, Einar Einarsfjord, Hafgrim Hafgrimsfjord and Vatnahverf, Arnlaug Arnlaugsfjord, but some went to the western settlement.

The above statement of these occurrences having taken place "fifteen winters before Christianity was established by law in Iceland" enables us to fix with certainty, the exact period of time when the final settlement was made by Erik and his followers in Greenland, namely, A. D. 985: Christianity having been established in Iceland in the year 1000.

BJARNI SEEKS OUT GREENLAND.

A. D. 986.

3. Herjulf was the son of Bard Herjulfson; he was kinsman to the colonist* Ingolf. To Herjulf gave Ingolf land between Vog and Reykjaness.† Herjulf lived first at Drepstock; Thorgerd hight his wife, and Bjarni was their son, a very hopeful man. He conceived, when yet young, a desire to travel abroad, and soon earned for himself both riches and respect, and he was every second winter abroad, every other at home with his father. Soon possessed Bjarni his own ship, and the last winter he was in Norway, Herjulf prepared for a voyage to Greenland with Erik. In the ship with Herjulf was a Christian from the Hebrides,‡ who made a hymn respecting the whirlpool,§ in which was the following verse:—

O thou who triest holy men!
Now guide me on my way,
Lord of the earth's wide vault, extend
Thy gracious hand to me!

Herjulf lived at Herjulfsness; he was a very respectable man. Erik the Red lived at Brattahlid; he was the most looked up to, and every one regulated themselves by him. These were Erik's children: Leif, Thorvald and Thorstein, but Freydis hight his daughter; she was married to a man who

* Landnamsman, see Introduc. p. vi.

† S. W. point of Iceland.

‡ Sudreyskr madr kristinn.

§ Hafgerdingar, described by an antient Icelandic writer as a dangerous pass in the Greenland ocean.—Antiq. Amer. p. 18, note a.

Thorvard hight; they lived in Garde, where is now the Bishop's seat; she was very haughty, but Thorvard was narrow-minded; she was married to him chiefly on account of his money. Heathen were the people in Greenland at this time. Bjarni came to Eyrar with his ship the summer of the same year in which his father had sailed away in spring. These tidings appeared serious to Bjarni, and he was unwilling to unload his ship. Then his seamen asked him what he would do; he answered that he intended to continue his custom, and pass the winter with his father: "and I will," said he, "bear for Greenland if ye will give me your company." All said that they would follow his counsel. Then said Bjarni: "Imprudent will appear our voyage since none of us has been in the Greenland ocean." However, they put to sea so soon as they were ready, and sailed for three days,* until the land was out of sight under the water; but then the fair wind fell, and there arose north winds and fogs, and they knew not where they were, and thus it continued for many days. After that saw they the sun again, and could discover the sky; they now made sail, and sailed for that day, before they saw land, and counselled with each other about what land that could be, and Bjarni said that he thought it could not be Greenland. They asked whether he wished to sail to this land or not. "My advice is," said he, "to sail close to the land;" and so they did, and soon saw that the

* Thrjá daga.

land was without mountains, and covered with wood, and had small heights. Then left they the land on their larboard* side, and let the stern turn from the land. Afterwards they sailed two days† before they saw another land. They asked if Bjarni thought that this was Greenland, but he said that he as little believed this to be Greenland as the other: "because in Greenland are said to be very high ice hills." They soon approached the land, and saw that it was a flat land covered with wood. Then the fair wind fell, and the sailors said that it seemed to them most advisable to land there; but Bjarni was unwilling to do so. They pretended that they were in want of both wood and water. "Ye have no want of either of the two," said Bjarni; for this, however, he met with some reproaches from the sailors. He bade them make sail, and so was done; they turned the prow from the land, and, sailing out into the open sea for three days,‡ with a south-west wind, saw then the third land; and this land was high, and covered with mountains and ice-hills. Then asked they whether Bjarni would land there, but he said that he would not: "for to me this land appears little inviting." Therefore did they not lower the sails, but held on along this land, and saw that it was an island; again turned they the stern from the land, and sailed out into the sea with the same fair wind; but the breeze freshened, and Bjarni then told them to shorten sail, and not sail faster than their ship

* Bakborda. † Tvö dægr. ‡ Thrjú dægr.

and ship's gear could hold out. They sailed now four days,* when they saw the fourth land. Then asked they Bjarni whether he thought that this was Greenland or not. Bjarni answered: "This is the most like Greenland, according to what I have been told about it, and here will we steer for land." So did they, and landed in the evening under a ness; and there was a boat by the ness, and just here lived Bjarni's father, and from him has the ness taken its name, and is since called Herjulfsness. Bjarni now repaired to his father's, and gave up seafaring, and was with his father so long as Herjulf lived, and afterwards he dwelt there after his father.

Such is the simple detail of the first voyage of the Northmen to the western hemisphere, and Professor Rafn shews that there are sufficient data in the antient Icelandic geographical works, to determine the position of the various coasts and headlands thus discovered by Bjarni Herjulfson. A day's sail was estimated by the Northmen at from twenty-seven to thirty geographical miles, and the knowledge of this fact, together with that of the direction of the wind, the course steered, the appearance of the shores, and other details contained in the narrative itself, together with the more minute description of the same lands given by succeeding voyagers,—leave no doubt that the countries thus discovered by Bjarni Herjulfson, were CONNECTICUT, LONG ISLAND, RHODE ISLAND, MASSACHUSETTS, NOVA SCOTIA, and NEWFOUNDLAND, and the date of the expedition is determined by the passage in the preliminary narrative which fixes the period of Herjulf's settlement at Herjulfsness in Iceland. (See p. 49.)

* Fjögur dægr.

It may, perhaps, be urged in disparagement of these discoveries that they were *accidental*,—that Bjarni Herjulfson set out in search of Greenland, and fell in with the eastern coast of North America; but so it was, also, with Columbus.—The sanguine and skilful Genoese navigator set sail in quest of Asia,* and discovered the West Indies; even when in his last voyage, he did reach the eastern

* "He set it down as a fundamental principle that the earth was a terraqueous globe, which might be travelled round from east to west, and that men stood foot to foot when on opposite points. The circumference from east to west, at the equator, he divided according to Ptolemy, into 24 hours of 15 degrees each, making 360 degrees. Of these he imagined, comparing the globe of Ptolemy with the earlier map of Marinus of Tyre, that 15 hours had been known to the antients, extending from the Canary or Fortunate Islands, to the city of Thinæ in *Asia*, the western and eastern extremities of the known world. The Portuguese had advanced the eastern discovery one hour more by the discovery of the Azore and Cape de Verde Islands: still about eight hours, or one third of the circumference of the earth, remained to be explored. This space he imagined to be occupied in a great measure by the eastern regions of *Asia*, which might extend so far as to approach the western shores of Europe and Africa. A navigator, therefore, by pursuing a direct course from east to west, must arrive at the extremity of *Asia*, or discover any intervening land. The great obstacle to be apprehended was from the tract of ocean that might intervene; but this could not be very wide, if the opinion of Alfraganus the Arabian were admitted, who by diminishing the size of the degrees, gave to the earth a smaller circumference than was assigned to it by other cosmographers; a theory to which Columbus seems, generally, to have given much faith. He was fortified, also, by the opinion of Aristotle, Seneca, Pliny, and Strabo, who considered the ocean but of moderate breadth, so as that one might pass from Cadiz westward to the *Indies* in a few days."—Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus by Washington Irving, Fam. Lib. No. XI. p. 14, 15.

"The great argument which induced him to his enterprise was the one first cited; namely, that the most eastern part of *Asia* known to the antients could not be separated from the Azores by more than a third of the circumference of the globe; that the intervening space must, in a great measure, be filled up by the unknown residue of *Asia*; and that, as the circumference of the world was less than was generally supposed, the *Asiatic* shores could easily be attained by a moderate voyage to the west."—Ib. p. 18.

shore of Central America, he still believed it to be Asia, and continued under that impression to the day of his death.* Besides, how different were the circumstances under which the two voyages were made? The Northmen, without compass or quadrant, without any of the advantages of science, geographical knowledge, personal experience, or previous discoveries,—without the support of either kings or governments,—which Columbus, however discouraged at the outset, eventually obtained,—but guided by the stars, and upheld by their own private resources, and a spirit of adventure which no dangers could deter—cross the broad northern ocean, and explore these distant lands! Columbus, on the other hand, went forth with all the advantages of that grand career of modern discovery which had been commenced in the preceding century, and which, under Prince Henry of Portugal, had been pushed forward to an eminent position in the period immediately preceding his first voyage.†

* "With all the visionary fervour of his imagination, its fondest dreams fell short of reality. He died in ignorance of the real grandeur of his discovery. Until his last breath, he entertained the idea that he had merely opened a new way to the old resorts of opulent commerce, and had discovered some of the wild regions of the East. He supposed Hispaniola to be the antient Ophir, which had been visited by the ships of King Solomon, and that Cuba and Terra Firma were but remote parts of *Asia*."—Irving's Columbus, Fam. Lib. No. XI. p. 353.

"He imagined that the vast stream of fresh water which poured into the gulph of Paria, issued from the fountain of the tree of life, in the midst of the Garden of Eden."—Ib. p. 219.

"He fancied that he had actually arrived at the Aurea Chersonesus, from whence, according to Josephus, the gold had been procured for the building of the Temple of Jerusalem."—Ib. p. 291.

† "Prince Henry called in the aid of science to dispel these errors. He established a Naval College and observatory at Sagres, and invited thither the most eminent professors of the nautical faculties. The effects of this establishment were soon apparent. A vast improvement took place in maps and charts; the compass was brought into more general use; the Portuguese marine became signalised for its hardy enterprises; Cape Bojador

The compass had been discovered and brought into general use; maps and charts had been constructed; astronomical and geographical science had become more diffused, and the discoveries of the African coast from Cape Blanco to Cape de Verde, together with the Cape de Verde and Azore Islands, had produced a general excitement amongst all who were in any way connected with a maritime life, and filled their minds with brilliant images of fairer islands and more wealthy shores amidst the boundless waters of the Atlantic.* It should also be recollected that Columbus, ever ready to gather information from veteran mariners, had heard of land seen far to the west of Ireland and of the island of Madeira; had been assured that, four hundred and fifty leagues east of Cape St. Vincent, carved wood, not cut with iron instruments, had been found in the sea, and that a similar fragment, together with reeds of an immense size, had drifted to Porto Santo from the west: added to this, was the fact of huge pine trees, of unknown species, having been wafted by westerly winds to the Azores, and human bodies of wondrous form and feature cast upon the island of Flores.†

was doubled; the region of the tropics penetrated and divested of its fancied terrors; the greatest part of the African coast from Cape Blanco to Cape de Verde, explored, and the Cape de Verde and Azore islands discovered."—Irving's Columbus, p. 9.

* "It was a period of general excitement with all who were connected with maritime life, or who resided in the vicinity of the ocean. The recent discoveries had inflamed their imaginations, and had filled them with ideas of other islands of greater wealth and beauty, yet to be discovered in the boundless wastes of the Atlantic."—Ib. p. 12.

† "Columbus was attentive to every gleam of information bearing upon his theory, that might be derived from veteran mariners, and the inhabitants of the lately discovered islands, who were placed, in a manner, on the frontier posts of geographical knowledge. One Antonio Leone, an inhabitant of Madeira, told him, that in sailing westwards one hundred leagues, he had seen three islands at a distance. A mariner of Port St. Mary, also asserted, that in the course of a voyage to Ireland, he had seen land to the west,

Nor should it be forgotten that Columbus visited Iceland in 1477,* when, having had access to the archives of the

which the ship's company took for some extreme part of Tartary. One Martin Vicenti, a pilot in the service of the King of Portugal, assured Columbus that, after sailing 450 leagues to the west of Cape St. Vincent, he had taken from the water a piece of carved wood, evidently not laboured with an iron instrument. As the wind had drifted it from the west, it might have come from some unknown land in that direction. Pedro Correo, brother-in-law of Columbus, also informed him, that he had seen a similar piece of wood, on the island of Porto Santo, which had drifted from the same quarter, and he had heard from the King of Portugal, that reeds of an immense size, had floated to those islands from the west, which Columbus supposed to be the kind of reeds of enormous magnitude described by Pomponius as growing in *India*. Trunks of huge pine trees, of a kind that did not grow upon any of the islands, had been wafted to the Azores by westerly winds. The inhabitants also informed him that the bodies of two dead men had been cast upon the island of Flores, whose features had caused great wonder and speculation, being different from those of any known race of people."—Irving's Columbus, p. 17.

* "While the design of attempting the discovery in the west was maturing in the mind of Columbus, he made a voyage to the northern seas, to the Island of Thule, to which the English navigators, particularly those of Bristol, were accustomed to resort on account of its fishery. He even advanced, he says, one hundred leagues beyond, penetrated the polar circle, and convinced himself of the fallacy of the popular belief, that the frozen zone was uninhabitable. The island thus mentioned by him as Thule is generally supposed to have been Iceland."—Ib. p. 20.

According to Mr. Irving's larger work, this visit took place in February, 1477, when Columbus appears to have observed with surprise that the sea was not frozen. A striking confirmation of this circumstance is mentioned by Finn Magnusen as having been found appended to an authentic public document, which came out at Eyafjord in the north part of the island, early in the month of March of the same year, and which states that "no snow was then seen upon the ground." (þá var snjólaus jörd) The same learned Icelander directs attention to the following remarkable coincidence:—In the year 1477, Magnus Eiolfson was Bishop of Skalholt in Iceland; since 1470, he had been Abbot of the Monastery of Helgafell, the place where the oldest documents relating to Greenland, Vinland, and the various parts of America discovered by the Northmen, had been written, and where they were, doubtless, carefully preserved, as it was from this very district that the most distinguished voyagers had gone forth. These documents must have been well known to Bishop Magnus, as were their general con-

island, and ample opportunity of conversing with the learned there, through the medium of the Latin language, he might easily have obtained a complete knowledge of the discoveries of the Northmen: sufficient at least, to confirm his belief in the existence of a western continent. How much the discoveries of the distinguished Genoese navigator were exceeded by those of the Northmen, will appear from the following narratives.

tents throughout the island, and it is therefore in the highest degree improbable that Columbus, whose mind had been filled with the idea of exploring a western continent since the year 1474, should have omitted to seek for and receive information respecting these early voyages. He arrived at Hvalfjord, or Hvalfjardareyri, on the south coast of Iceland, at a time when that harbour was most frequented, and it is well known that Bishop Magnus visited the neighbouring churches in the spring or summer. See Nord. Tidsk. f. Oldkynd. B. 2. p. 129. Om de Engelskes Handel og Færd paa Island i det 15 de Aarhundrede, især med Hensyn til Columbus's formeentlige Reise dertil i Aaret 1477, og hans Beretninger desangaaende, ved Finn Magnusen.

No mention has been made here of the supposed voyages of the Zeni in the 14th century, which a modern historian has enumerated amongst the causes of encouragement to the views and projects of Columbus (Hist. of Maritime and Inland Discovery, Vol. I. p. 221-225), for although these voyages are said to have been made in the 14th century, no account of them was published until 1558, more than fifty years after the death of Columbus! and the whole story has been clearly shewn by an acute Danish writer, to have been a compilation from faulty geographical works and vague reports, mixed up with the most palpable inconsistencies, anachronisms, and fable. See Bemærkninger over de Venetianerne Zeni tilskrevne Reiser i Norden, af C. C. Zahrtmann. Capitain-lieutenant, ap. Nord. Tid. f. Oldkynd. B. 2. p. 1.

VOYAGE OF LEIF ERIKSON,

AND FIRST SETTLEMENT IN MASSACHUSETTS.

A.D. 994.

HERE BEGINNETH THE NARRATIVE OF THE GREENLANDERS.

THE next thing now to be related is, that Bjarni Herjulfson went out from Greenland, and visited Erik Jarl,* and the Jarl received him well. Bjarni told about his voyages, that he had seen unknown lands, and people thought that he had shown no curiosity, when he had nothing to relate about these countries, and this became somewhat a matter of reproach to him. Bjarni became one of the Jarl's courtiers, and came back to Greenland the summer after. There was now much talk about voyages of discovery. Leif, the son of Erik the Red, of Brattahlid, went to Bjarni Herjulfson, and bought the ship of him, and engaged men for it, so that there were thirty-five men in all. Leif asked his father Erik to be the leader on the voyage, but Erik excused himself, saying that he was now pretty well stricken in years, and could not now, as formerly, hold out all the hardships of the sea. Leif said that still he was the one of the family whom good fortune would soonest attend; and Erik gave in to Leif's request, and rode from home so soon as they were ready; and it was but a short way to the ship. The horse stumbled that Erik rode, and he fell off,

* Erik, Jarl (Earl) of Norway. This is supposed by Rafn to have happened in the year 994.—Antiq. Amer. p. xxix.

and bruised his foot. Then said Erik, "It is not ordained that I should discover more countries than that which we now inhabit, and we should make no further attempt in company." Erik went home to Brattahlid, but Leif repaired to the ship, and his comrades with him, thirty-five men. There was a southern* on the voyage, who Tyrker hight. Now prepared they their ship, and sailed out into the sea when they were ready, and then found that land first which Bjarni had found last. There sailed they to the land, and cast anchor, and put off boats, and went ashore, and saw there no grass. Great icebergs† were over all up the country, but like a plain of flat stones‡ was all from the sea to the mountains, and it appeared to them that this land had no good qualities. Then said Leif, "We have not done like Bjarni about this land, that we have not been upon it; now will I give the land a name, and call it HELLULAND."§ Then went they on

* Sudrmadr, supposed to mean a German, as the terms Sudrmenn and Thydverskirmenn are used promiscuously to distinguish the natives of Germany, by old northern writers. Antiq. Amer. p. 28, note a.

† Jöklar miklir. ‡ Sem ein hella.

§ From Hella, a flat stone. The coast of NEWFOUNDLAND is thus described by the German writer Anspach: Die Insel Newfoundland offenbart sich in seltsamer Wunderbarkeit, als ob die Natur sich in regellosem Schaffen in der Darstellung Erstaunen weckender Denkmähler ihrer macht ergötzt hätte —Was von dem Innern der Insel bekannt ist, besteht aus felsigtem dürrem Boden, steilen Hügeln, mit verkrüppeltem Holtze bedeckt, einigen engen sandigen Thälern, und weit ausgedehnten Haide Ebenen, oder *kahlen, mehr oder minder verbreiteten Felsenflächen wo kein Baum, nicht einmal ein gesträuch gedeiht*, und die man daher Barren (Barrens) nennt." Geschichte und Beschreibung von Newfoundland und der Küste Labrador von C. A. Anspach. ap. Antiq. Amer. pp. 421-2.

board, and after that sailed out to sea, and found another land; they sailed again to the land, and cast anchor, then put off boats and went on shore. This land was flat, and covered with wood, and white sands* were far around where they went, and the shore was low.† Then said Leif, "This land shall be named after its qualities, and called MARKLAND‡ (woodland.)" They then immediately returned to the ship. Now sailed they thence into the open sea, with a north-east wind, and were

"This vast tract of land is extremely *barren*, and altogether incapable of cultivation. The surface is everywhere uneven, and covered with *large stones*, some of which are of amazing dimensions. There is no such thing as level land." Particulars of Labrador.— Phil. Transac. Vol. LXIV. p. 374-5, ap. Antiq. Amer. pp. 419-20.

"The most lofty perpendicular precipices rise to an amazing height upon the north side, and the southern shore only appears less striking in its attitude from the summit of the opposite rocks."—"The summit of this majestic headland (Cape Brogle) was now (14th June) covered with snow." Voyage of His Majesty's ship Rosamond to Newfoundland and the southern coast of Labrador, by Lieut. Edward Chappell, R.N., Lond. 1818, pp. 41-60, ap. Antiq. Amer. p. 422.

* Sandar hvitir.

† Osæbratt.

‡ "The land about the Harbour of HALIFAX, and a little to the southward of it, is, in appearance, rugged and rocky, and has on it, in several places, scrubby withered wood. Although it seems bold, yet it is not high." Columbian Navigator, Vol. I. P. i. p. 17. "*The land is low in general*, and not visible twenty miles off, except from the quarter-deck of a seventy-four. Apostogon Hills have a long level appearance. Between Cape le Have and Port Medway, the coast *to the seaward* being *level* and *low*, and the shores *with white rocks*, and *low barren* points; from thence to Shelburne and Port Roseway are woods. Near Port Haldimand are several *barren* places, and thence to Cape Sable, which makes the S. W. point into Barrington Bay, is a *low woody* island, at the S. E. extremity of a range of *sandy cliffs*, which are very remarkable at a considerable distance in the offing."—New North American Pilot, Lond. 1815, P. ii. p. 1-6, ap. Antiq. Amer. p. 423.

two days* at sea before they saw land, and they sailed thither and came to an island which lay to the eastward of the land,† and went up there, and looked round them in good weather, and observed that there was dew upon the grass; and it so happened that they touched the dew with their hands, and raised the fingers to the mouth, and they thought that they had never before tasted any thing so sweet.

This island appears to have been NANTUCKET, where honey dew is known to abound,‡ and Helluland and Markland are clearly shewn by Professor Rafn, on the authority of modern voyagers and hydrographers, the chief of whom are quoted in the preceding notes—to be NEWFOUNDLAND and NOVA SCOTIA. The narrative continues:—

After that they went to the ship, and sailed into a sound, which lay between the island and a ness (promontory), which ran out to the eastward of the land; and then steered westwards past the ness. It was very shallow§ at ebb tide, and their ship stood up, so that it was far to see from the ship to the water.

The statement of shoal water in this sound corresponds exactly with the description of the passage between Nan-

* 2 dægr.

† Literally "northward of the land," (nordr af landinu,) but the Editor shows that the Northmen placed this point of the compass nearly in the position of our east."—Antiq. Amer. p. 428.

‡ See communication from Dr. Webb, Secretary to the Rhode Island Historical Society. Antiq. Amer. p. 443.

§ Grunnsæfui mikit.

tucket and Cape Cod, or the peninsula of Barnstable, as given in the Columbian Navigator.*

But so much did they desire to land, that they did not give themselves time to wait until the water again rose under their ship, but ran at once on shore, at a place where a river flows out of a lake: but so soon as the waters rose up under the ship, then took they boats, and rowed to the ship, and floated it up to the river, and thence into the lake, and there cast anchor, and brought up from the ship their skin cots,† and made there booths.‡

From these details, it is evident that Leif and his companions shaped their course through NANTUCKET BAY, beyond the south-western extremity of the peninsula of CAPE COD; thence across the mouth of BUZZARD'S BAY to SEACONNET PASSAGE, and thus up the POCASSET RIVER, to MOUNT HOPE BAY, which they seem to have taken for a lake.

After this took they counsel, and formed the resolution of remaining there for the winter, and

* "The eastern entrance is impeded by numerous riffs and other shoals, as are likewise the central and western parts, and the whole presents an aspect of *drowned lands*, which, there can be little doubt, were, at some period, anterior to history, connected with the main."—p. 72. See Antiq. Amer. p. 425.

† *Húdföt*, from *húd*, skin, and *fat*, a case or covering, being strictly speaking, a skin bag or pouch, in which the antients were accustomed to keep their clothes and other articles on a journey: the same was used for a bed on ship-board, as appears in the Laxdæla Saga, p. 116, where Thurid says "hun gekk at *húdfati* þvi, er Geirmundr svaf i"—"she went to the couch, where Geirmund slept." It thus answers to the *uter* of the Romans and στρωματοδεσμῳ of the Greeks. Antiq. Am. p. 31.

‡ *Búdir*. f. pl. of *búd*, from *búa*, to remain or inhabit, hence, probably, the Eng. booth.

built there large houses.* There was no want of salmon either in the river or in the lake, and larger salmon than they had before seen.† The nature of the country was, as they thought, so good, that cattle would not require house feeding‡ in winter, for there came no frost in winter, and little did the grass wither there. Day and night were more equal than in Greenland or Iceland, for on the shortest day, was the sun above the horizon from half-past seven in the forenoon till half-past four in the afternoon.§

* Hús mikil.

† "The salmon (Salmo Salar) is met with a little farther to the eastward of us, and was formerly found in our waters."—Dr. Webb, Sec. Rhode Island Hist. Soc. ap. Antiq. Am. p. 367.

‡ Fodr.

§ "Sol hafdi dar eyktarstad ok dagmalastad um skamdegi." The misconception of this passage by Torfæus, who was followed by Wormskiold, Malte Brun, and others led to an error as to the locality of Vinland which is ably exposed by Professor Rafn in a long and lucid note in explanation of the Icelandic terms. Antiq. Amer. p. 435. note b. The subject has been further elucidated in an interesting article "On the Antient Scandinavians' division of the time of the day," by Finn Magnusen, published in the Memoirs of the Society of Northern Antiquaries, by which it appears that:—

The antient Scandinavians divided the heavens or the horizon into 8 grand divisions, and the times of the day according to the sun's apparent motion through these divisions, the passage through each of which they supposed to occupy a period of three hours. The day was therefore divided into portions of time corresponding with these 8 divisions, each of which was called an *eykt*, signifying an eighth part. This *eykt* was again divided, like each of the grand divisions of the heavens, into two smaller and equal portions, called *stund* or *mal*. In order to determine these divisions of time, the inhabitants of each place carefully observed the diurnal course of the sun, and noted the terrestrial objects over which it seemed to stand. Such a natural or artificial object was called in Iceland *dagsmark* (day-mark). They were also led to fix these daymarks by a division of the horizon according to the principal winds, as well as by the wants of their domestic economy; the shepherd's rising time, for instance, was called

This would give very nearly the latitude of Mount Hope Bay, which locality is previously pointed out by the details relating to the soil and climate, and fully corresponds with the descriptions of modern travellers: "Les paturages," says Warden, "sont beaux en general, et plus particulièrement au pays de Narraganset. Le pays de South-Kingston, prés de la côte de la mer et de la baie de Narraganset, est très fertile, et d'un bon rapport. Ce sol est formé d'un terreau profond et d'une petite partie de sable et de gravier; et la temperature est si douce que *la vegetation souffre rarement du froid* ou de la sécheresse." Of Rhode Island he says;—"On l'appelle *le paradis de l'Amérique* parce qu'elle emporte sur les autres lieux par

Hirdis rismál, which corresponds with half past 4 o'clock, A. M. and this was the beginning of the natural day (dægr) of 24 hours. Reckoning from the hirdis rismál, the eighth *stund* or eighth half *eykt* terminated exactly at half-past 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and therefore this particular period was called κατ' ἐξοχήν EYKT. This eykt, strictly speaking, commenced at 3 o'clock P. M. and ended at half-past 4 P. M. when it was said to be in *eyktarstadr*, or the termination of the eykt. The precise moment that the sun appeared in this place, indicated the termination of the artificial day (dagr) and half the natural day (dægr), and was therefore held especially deserving of notice: the hours of labour, also, are supposed to have ended at this time. Six o'clock A. M. was called *Midr morgun*; half-past 7 A. M. *Dagmal*; 9 A. M. *Dagverdarmal*, &c. Winter was considered to commence in Iceland about the 17th October, and Bishop Thorlacius, the calculator of the Astronomical Calendar, fixes sunrise in the South of Iceland on the 17th October, at half-past 7 A. M. At this hour, according to the Saga, it rose in Vinland on the shortest day, and set at half-past 4 P. M. which data fix the latitude of the place at 41° 43′ 10″, being nearly that of Mount Hope Bay.—See Antiq. Amer. pp. 435—8, Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord 1836-1837, p. 165, and Dial of the antient Northmen in Appendix. Professor Rafn makes the latitude from the above data 41° 24′ 10″ [Antiq. Amer. p. 436], but if, as is to be presumed, the observation was made, when the sun had completely risen, and his lower edge appeared to touch the horizon, it could not be less than 41° 43′ 10″; however, the difference is unimportant, as regards the locality, for nothing more than an approximation to the correct latitude of the place, could be expected from the rude method of calculating time, which was then practised by the Northmen.

sa situation son sol et son climat."* The German historian Ebeling offers equally favourable testimony,† and Hitchcock's scientific Report of the State of Massachusetts fully accords with these.

But when they had done with the house building, Leif said to his comrades:—"Now will I divide our men into two parts, and have the land explored, and the half of the men shall remain at home at the house, while the other half explore the land; but however, not go further than that they can come home in the evening, and they should not separate." Now they did so for a time, and Leif changed about, so that the one day he went with them, and the other remained at home in the house. Leif was a great and strong man, grave and well favoured, therewith sensible and moderate in all things.

LEIF THE LUCKY FOUND FOLK UPON A ROCK IN THE SEA.

2. It happened one evening that a man of the party was missing, and this was Tyrker the German.

* Description des Etats Unis de l'Amérique Septentrionale, Paris, 1820, T. 1, pp. 499—503, ap. Antiq. Amer. pp. 439—40.

† "An der See ist der Winter meisten theils mild, und nur von kurzer Dauer, daher auch der Schnee nie lange liegen bleibt——Man hält das hiesige klima für das gesundeste in ganz Nordamerika, weswegen viele kränkliche Personen aus den südlichen Staaten im Sommer nach den hiesigen Inseln kommen, um sich zu erholen.—Das Land hat einen Ueberfluss von nahrhaften Grasarten und Futterkräutern, und sonderlich sind in dem ehemaligen Gebiete von Narraganset die vortrefflichsten Triften."—Erdbescreibung und Geschichte von América, B. 2, p. 4-12. A long and highly interesting reply to enquiries instituted by Professor Rafn on this subject, from Dr. Webb, Secretary to the Rhode Island Historical Society, contains similar evidence of the fertility of the soil and salubrity of the climate. See Antiq. Amer. p. 368.

This took Leif much to heart, for Tyrker had been long with his father and him, and loved Leif much in his childhood. Leif now took his people severely to task, and prepared to seek for Tyrker, and took twelve men with him. But when they had gotten a short way from the house, then came Tyrker towards them, and was joyfully received. Leif soon saw that his foster-father was not in his right senses. Tyrker had a high forehead, and unsteady eyes, was freckled in the face, small and mean in stature, but excellent in all kinds of artifice. Then said Leif to him: "Why wert thou so late my fosterer, and separated from the party?" He now spoke first, for a long time, in German, and rolled his eyes about to different sides, and twisted his mouth, but they did not understand what he said. After a time he spoke Norsk.* "I have not been much further off, but still have I something new to tell of; I found vines and grapes." "But is that true, my fosterer?" quoth Leif. "Surely is it true," replied he, "for I was bred up in a land where there is no want of either vines or grapes." They slept now for the night, but in the morning, Leif said to his sailors: "We will now set about two things, in that the one day we gather grapes, and the other day cut vines and fell trees, so from thence will be a loading for my ship," and that was the counsel taken, and it is said their

* Norrænu, i. e. the northern tongue (Dönsk túnga) being the language then common to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, Greenland, and part of Britain. Antiq. Amer. p. 35.

long boat was filled with grapes. Now was a cargo cut down for the ship, and when the spring came, they got ready, and sailed away, and Leif gave the land a name after its qualities, and called it VINLAND.

It appears by a communication from Dr. Webb, Secretary to the Rhode Island Historical Society, which is given in that part of Professor Rafn's work, entitled *Monumentum vetustum in Massachusetts*, that wild grape vines of several varieties, as well as maize or Indian corn, and other esculents, were found growing in that district, in great profusion, when it was first visited by the Europeans. Hence the name of Vinland (Vineland), given to the country by Leif, a name mentioned by Adam of Bremen,* Torfæus and Wormius, as well as by Pinkerton and Malte Brun, as designating a country frequently visited by the Northmen. Hence also the modern name of Martha's Vineyard given to the neighbouring island; and in the adjoining province of Connecticut, Warden states that "La *vigne sauvage* grimpe de tous côtés sur les arbres."† The narrative continues:—

They sailed now into the open sea, and had a fair wind until they saw Greenland, and the mountains below the jöklers. Then a man put in his word and said to Leif: "Why do you steer so close to the wind?" Leif answered: "I attend to my steering,

* "Præterea unam adhuc regionem recitavit (Sveinn Ulfsson king of Denmark) a multis in eo repertam oceano, quæ dicitur WINLAND, eo quod ibi *vites sponte nascantur* vinum optimum ferentes; nam et *fruges* ibi *non seminatas* habundare, non fabulosa opinione, sed certa comperimus relatione Danorum." Adam Brem. Descriptio de situ Daniæ et reliquarum, quæ trans Daniam sunt, regionum. ap. Antiq. Amer. p. 338.

† II. p. 15. I. p. 455. ap. Antiq. Amer. p. 441.

and something more, and can ye not see any thing?" They answered that they could not observe any thing extraordinary. "I know not," said Leif, "whether I see a ship or a rock." Now looked they, and said it was a rock. But he saw so much sharper than they, that he perceived there were men upon the rock. "Now let us," said Leif, "hold our wind, so that we come up to them, if they should want our assistance; and the necessity demands that we should help them; and if they should not be kindly disposed, the power is in our hands, and not in their's." Now sailed they under the rock, and lowered their sails, and cast anchor, and put out another little boat, which they had with them. Then asked Tyrker who their leader was? He called himself Thorer, and said he was a Northman; "but what is *thy* name?" said he. Leif told his name. "Art thou a son of Erik the Red, of Brattahlid?" quoth he. Leif answered that so it was. "Now will I," said Leif, "take ye all on board my ship, and as much of the goods as the ship can hold." They accepted this offer, and sailed thereupon to Eriksfjord with the cargo, and thence to Brattahlid, where they unloaded the ship. After that, Leif invited Thorer and his wife Gudrid, and three other men to stop with him, and got berths for the other seamen, as well Thorer's as his own, elsewhere. Leif took fifteen men from the rock: he was, after that, called Leif the Lucky. Leif had now earned both riches and respect. The same winter came a heavy sickness among Thorer's

people, and carried off as well Thorer himself as many of his men. This winter died also Erik the Red. Now was there much talk about Leif's voyage to Vinland, and Thorvald, his brother, thought that the land had been much too little explored. Then said Leif to Thorvald: "Thou can'st go with my ship, brother! if thou wilt, to Vinland, but I wish first that the ship should go and fetch the timber, which Thorer had upon the rock;" and so was done.

THORVALD REPAIRS TO VINLAND.

A. D. 1002.

3. Now Thorvald made ready for this voyage with 30 men, and took counsel thereon with Leif his brother. Then made they their ship ready, and put to sea, and nothing is told of their voyage until they came to Leif's booths in Vinland. There they laid up their ship, and spent a pleasant winter,* and caught fish for their support. But in the spring, said Thorvald, that they should make ready the ship, and that some of the men should take the ship's long boat round the western part of the land, and explore there during the summer. To them appeared the land fair and woody, and but a short distance between the wood and the sea, and white sands; there were many islands, and much shallow water. They found neither dwellings

* A. D. 1002—1003.

of men or beasts, except upon an island, to the westward, where they found a corn-shed of wood,* but many works of men they found not; and they then went back and came to Leif's booths in the autumn. But the next summer,† went Thorvald eastward with the ship, and round the land to the northward. Here came a heavy storm upon them when off a ness, so that they were driven on shore, and the keel broke off from the ship, and they remained here a long time, and repaired their ship. Then said Thorvald to his companions: "Now will I that we fix up the keel here upon the ness, and call it Keelness (Kjalarness),‡ and so did they. After that they sailed away round the eastern shores of the land, and into the mouths of the friths, which lay nearest thereto, and to a point of land which stretched out, and was covered all over with wood. There they came to, with the ship, and shoved out a plank§ to the land, and Thorvald went up the country, with all his companions. He then said: "Here is beautiful, and here would I like to raise my dwelling." Then went they to the ship, and saw upon the sands within the promontory, three elevations,‖ and went thither, and saw there three skin boats (canoes),¶ and three men under each. Then divided they their people, and caught them all, except one, who got away with his

* Kornhjálm af tré, from *korn*, corn, and *hjalmr*, a covering, hence helmet-shed, which signification also obtains in the Danish language. Antiq. Amer. p. 41, note *a*.

† A.D. 1004.

‡ See Map of Vinland, Plate I.

§ Bryggjum.

‖ Hædir.

¶ Húdkeipa.

boat. They killed the other eight, and then went back to the cape, and looked round them, and saw some heights inside of the frith, and supposed that these were dwellings. After that, so great a drowsiness came upon them, that they could not keep awake, and they all fell asleep. Then came a shout over them, so that they all awoke. Thus said the shout: "Wake thou! Thorvald! and all thy companions, if thou wilt preserve life, and return thou to thy ship, with all thy men, and leave the land without delay." Then rushed out from the interior of the frith, an innumerable crowd of skin boats, and made towards them. Thorvald said then: "We will put out the battle-skreen,* and defend ourselves as well as we can, but fight little against them." So did they, and the Skrælings† shot at them for a time, but afterwards ran away, each as fast as he could. Then asked Thorvald his men if they had gotten any wounds; they answered that no one was wounded. "I have gotten a wound under the arm," said he, "for an arrow fled between the edge of the ship and the shield, in under my arm, and here is the arrow, and it will prove a mortal wound to me. Now counsel I ye, that ye

* Vigfleka, from *vig* battle, and *fleki* or *flaki* flat and broad, hence a shield made of large planks of wood.

† Skrælingar. Various definitions have been given of this term, some authors attributing it to the low stature of the Esquimaux, who are also called *Smælingar* (diminutive men) by Icelandic authors, and others deducing it from *skræla* to make dry, in allusion to their withered appearance. The word *skrækja* to cry out, has also been given as the etymology of the term, from their habit of shouting. Antiq. Amer. p. 45. note *a*.

get ready instantly to depart, but ye shall bear me to that cape, where I thought it best to dwell; it may be that a true word fell from my mouth, that I should dwell there for a time; there shall ye bury me, and set up crosses at my head and feet, and call the place KROSSANESS* for ever in all time to come." Greenland was then Christianized, but Erik the Red died before Christianity was introduced. Now Thorvald died, but they did all things according to his directions, and then went away, and returned to their companions, and told to each other the tidings which they knew, and dwelt there for the winter, and gathered grapes and vines to load the ship. But in the spring† they made ready to sail to Greenland, and came with their ship in Eriksfjord, and could now tell great tidings to Leif.

* This appears to have been Cape or POINT ALDERTON, which is thus described by Hitchcock:—"Supposing the traveller to start, as before, from Boston, the long and narrow neck of land connecting the settlement of Hull with the mainland, must not be past unvisited. To say nothing of the rocks, which, at the head of this beach, constitute almost the entire surface, rivalling our Cape Ann in this respect, and which, on the shore, present a remarkable and elegant variety of colours, the beach itself, not less than four or five miles in extent, is much more interesting than that leading to Nahant. The light house, and the Brewster, and other islands in view, as one advanced towards Hull, are picturesque objects; and then the pleasant and sunny situation of the little village of Hull, furnishes a convenient *resting place* for the traveller." Laurie and Whittle's sailing directions also make mention of "a remarkable grove of trees" at this point, as does the Duke of Saxe Weimar in his American travels. Antiq. Amer. p. 431.

† A. D. 1005.

UNSUCCESSFUL VOYAGE OF THORSTEIN ERIKSON.

A. D. 1005.

THORSTEIN ERIKSON DIES IN THE WESTERN SETTLEMENT.

4. Meantime it had happened in Greenland, that Thorstein in Eriksfjord married Gudrid, Thorbjörn's daughter, who had been formerly married to Thorer the Eastman,* as is before related.† Now Thorstein Erikson conceived a desire to go to Vinland after the body of Thorvald his brother, and he made ready the same ship, and chose great and strong men for the crew, and had with him 25 men, and Gudrid his wife. They sailed away so soon as they were ready, and came out of sight of the land. They drove about in the sea the whole summer, and knew not where they were; and when the first week of winter‡ was past, then landed they in Lysefjord in Greenland, in the western settlement. Thorstein sought shelter for them and procured lodging for all his crew; but he himself and his wife were without lodging, and they, therefore, remained some two nights in the ship. Then was Christianity yet new in Greenland. Now it came to

* Austmadr. Such were the Norwegians often called by the Icelanders, Norway lying to the east of their island. Antiq. Amer. p. 47, note *a*.

† Namely, in the lost Saga before mentioned called "Erik's Saga," see p. 48.

‡ Whilst the Julian calendar, introduced after Christianity, was in use amongst the Icelanders, they considered winter to commence about the 17th October. Finn Magnusen ap. Mem. des Antiq. du Nord. 1836-1837, p. 179.

pass one day that some people repaired, early in the morning, to their tent, and the leader of the party asked who was in the tent. Thorstein answered: "Here are two persons, but who asks the question?" "Thorstein is my name," said the other, and I am called Thorstein the black, but my business here is to bid ye both, thou and thy wife, to come and stop at my house." Thorstein said that he would talk the matter over with his wife, but she told him to decide, and he accepted the bidding. "Then will I come after ye in the morning with horses, for I want nothing to entertain ye both; but it is very wearisome at my house, for we are there but two, I and my wife, and I am very morose; I have also a different religion from yours, and yet hold I that for the better which ye have." Now came he after them in the morning with horses, and they went to lodge with Thorstein the black, who shewed them every hospitality. Gudrid was a grave and dignified woman, and therewith sensible, and knew well how to carry herself among strangers. Early that winter came sickness amongst Thorstein Erikson's men, and there died many of his people. Thorstein had coffins made for the bodies of those who died, and caused them to be taken out to the ship, and there laid; "for I will," said he, "have all the bodies taken to Eriksfjord in the summer." Now it was not long before the sickness came also into Thorstein's house, and his wife, who hight Grimhild took the sickness first; she was very large, and strong as a man, but still

did the sickness master her. And soon after that, the disease attacked Thorstein Erikson, and they both lay ill at the same time, and Grimhild, the wife of Thorstein the black, died. But when she was dead, then went Thorstein out of the room, after a plank to lay the body upon. Then said Gudrid: "Stay not long away, my Thorstein!" he answered that so it should be. Then said Thorstein Erikson: "Strangely now is our housemother* going on, for she pushes herself up on her elbows, and stretches her feet out of bed, and feels for her shoes." At that moment came in the husband Thorstein, and Grimhild then lay down, and every beam in the room creaked. Now Thorstein made a coffin for Grimhild's body, and took it out, and buried it; but although he was a large and powerful man, it took all his strength to bring it out of the place. Now the sickness attacked Thorstein Erikson and he died, which his wife Gudrid took much to heart. They were then all in the room; Gudrid had taken her seat upon a chair beyond the bench, upon which Thorstein, her husband, had lain; then Thorstein the host took Gudrid from the chair upon his knees, and sat down with her upon another bench, just opposite Thorstein's body. He comforted her in many ways, and cheered her up, and promised to go with her to Eriksfjord, with her husband's body, and those of his companions; "and I will also," added he, "bring many servants to comfort and amuse thee." She thanked him.

* Húsfreyju

Then Thorstein Erikson sat himself up on the bench, and said: "Where is Gudrid?" Three times said he that, but she answered not. Then said she to Thorstein the host: "Shall I answer his questions or not?" He counselled her not to answer. After this, went Thorstein the host across the floor, and sat himself on a chair, but Gudrid sat upon his knees, and he said: "What wilt thou Namesake?" After a little he answered: "I wish much to tell Gudrid her fortune, in order that she may be the better reconciled to my death, for I have now come to a good resting place; but this can I tell thee, Gudrid! that thou wilt be married to an Icelander, and ye shall live long together; and have a numerous posterity, powerful, distinguished, and excellent, sweet and well favoured; ye shall remove from Greenland to Norway, and from thence to Iceland; there shall ye live long, and thou shalt outlive him. Then wilt thou go abroad, and travel to Rome, and come back again to Iceland, to thy house; and then will a church be built, and thou wilt reside there, and become a nun, and there wilt thou die." And when he had said these words, Thorstein fell back, and his corpse was set in order, and taken to the ship. Now Thorstein the host kept well all the promises which he had made to Gudrid; in spring* he sold his farm, and his cattle, and betook himself to the ship, with Gudrid, and all that he possessed; he made ready the ship, and procured men therefor,

* A. D. 1006.

and then sailed to Eriksfjord. The bodies were now buried by the Church. Gudrid repaired to Leif in Brattahlid, but Thorstein the black made himself a dwelling at Eriksfjord, and dwelt there so long as he lived, and was looked upon as a very able man.

This prophetic announcement of Thorstein Erikson is highly characteristic of the superstition of the times, and although pertaining to the marvellous, is not the less corroborative of the authenticity of the narrative. "Such incidents," says Sir Walter Scott, "make an invariable part of the history of a rude age, and the chronicles which do not afford these marks of human credulity, may be grievously suspected as being deficient in authenticity."*

* Abstract of Eyrbyggia Saga, Miscell. Prose works, Vol. v. p. 365. This interesting abstract first appeared in "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," 4to. Edinb. 1814, a work of high value and great promise, but which the want of public support compelled the distinguished compilers and antiquaries Jamieson and Weber, to discontinue.

From the Heimskringla, or History of the Norwegian Kings, according to the 2nd Vellum Codex of the Arnæ-Magnæan Collection, No. 45, Folio.

VINLAND THE GOOD IS DISCOVERED.

The same winter* was Leif, the son of Erik the Red, with King Olaf, in good repute, and embraced Christianity. But the summer that Gissur went to Iceland, King Olaf sent Leif to Greenland, in order to make known Christianity there; he sailed the same summer to Greenland. He found, in the sea, some people on a wreck, and helped them; the same time discovered he Vinland the Good, and came in harvest to Greenland. He had with him a priest, and other clerks, and went to dwell at Brattahlid with Erik, his father. Men called him afterwards Leif the Lucky; but Erik his father said, that these two things went one against the other, inasmuch as Leif had saved the crew of the ship, but brought evil men† to Greenland, namely the priests.

* A. D. 999—1000, Antiq. Amer. p. 191, note *b*.

† Skæmanninn.

From the History of Olaf Tryggvason, Chap. 231, 2nd Vellum Codex of Arnæ-Magnæan Collection, No. 61, 54, 53. Folio.

LEIF CHRISTIANIZES GREENLAND.

The same spring* sent King Olaf, as is before related, Gissur and Hjelte to Iceland. Then sent the king also Leif Erikson to Greenland, to make known Christianity there. The king gave him a priest, and some other holy men, to baptize the people there, and teach them the true faith. Leif sailed that summer to Greenland; he took up in the sea, the men of a ship, which was entirely lost, and lay a complete broken wreck; and on this same voyage discovered he Vinland the Good, and came in the end of the summer to Greenland; and went to live at Brattahlid with Erik his father. People called him afterwards Leif the Lucky, but Erik his father said that these two things went against each other, since Leif had assisted the crew of the ship, and saved them from death, and that he had brought injurious men (so called he the priests) to Greenland; but still, after the counsel and instigation of Leif, was Erik baptized, and all the people in Greenland.

* A. D. 1000, Antiq. Amer. 193, note *b*.

Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne.

Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne.

NEXT in importance and interest to the Saga of Erik the Red, is that of THORFINN, with the significant surname of KARLSEFNE, i. e. destined to become a great man. This distinguished individual was a wealthy and powerful Icelandic merchant, descended from an illustrious line of Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Irish, and Scottish ancestors, some of whom were kings, or of royal blood. The narrative of his exploits is taken from two antient Icelandic MSS. not previously known to the literati, and one of which, there is every reason to believe, is a genuine autograph of the celebrated Hauk Erlendson, who was Lagman or Chief Governor of Iceland in 1295, and one of the compilers of the Landnámabók: he was also a descendant of Karlsefne in the ninth generation. This very remarkable Saga forms part of the Arnæ-Magnæan collection, and besides short notices of the discoveries of the earlier voyagers, which are more fully described in the Saga of Erik the Red, gives detailed accounts of voyages to, and discoveries in America, carried on by Karlsefne and his companions for a period of three years, commencing in 1007. Some discrepancies and misnomers appear in those parts of the narrative, which treat of the personages and

events recorded in the preceding Saga, but they are only such as to preclude all suspicion of confederacy or fraud on the part of the writers, as all the *main facts* are substantially the same in both; and the circumstance of the Saga of Erik having been written in Greenland, while that of Karlsefne was written in Iceland, is sufficient to account for these variations. The same circumstance, also, renders the former the best authority in all matters of detail connected with Greenland, while the other must be considered more correct respecting occurrences relating to Iceland. These differences are pointed out in the notes, and where any minor points of interesting detail connected with the voyage of Karlsefne appear in the Saga of Erik the Red, while they are absent in Karlsefne's Saga, they have been supplied from that of Erik, the interpolation being pointed out.

Torfæus imagined that the Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne was lost, and the only knowledge he had of its contents, was derived from some corrupt extracts contained in the collection of materials for the history of antient Greenland, left by the Icelandic yeoman Björn Johnson of Skardso.

Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne.

GENEALOGY OF THORFINN KARLSEFNE, HIS VOYAGE TO GREENLAND, AND MARRIAGE WITH GUDRID, THE WIDOW OF THORSTEIN ERIKSON.

Concerning Thord of Höfda.

Thord hight a man who lived at Höfda in Höfda strand; he married Fridgerda, daughter of Thorer Hyma and Fridgerda daughter of Kjarval, king of the Irish.* Thord was the son of Bjarni Byrdusmjör, son of Thorvald Ryg, son of Asleik, son of Bjarni Jarnsid, son of Ragnar Lodbrok. They had a son called Snorri; he married Thorhild Rjúpa, daughter of Thord Gellar; their son was Thord Hesthöfdi. Thorfinnn Karlsefne hight Thord's son; Thorfinn's mother hight Thorum. Thorfinn took to trading voyages, and was thought an able seaman and merchant. One summer Karlsefne fitted out his ship, and purposed a voyage to Greenland. Snorri Thorbrandson, of Alptefjord, went with him, and there were forty men in the ship. There was a man hight Bjarni Grimolfson, of Breidafjord; another hight Thorhall Gamlason, an Eastfjordish man; they fitted out their ship the same summer for Greenland: there were also forty men in the ship. Karlsefne and

* Ira konung.

the others put to sea with these two ships, so soon as they were ready. Nothing is told about how long they were at sea, but it is to be related that both these ships came to Eriksfjord in the autumn.* Erik† rode to the ship together with several of the inhabitants, and they began to deal in a friendly manner. Both the ship's captains‡ begged Erik (Leif) to take as much of the goods as he wished; but Erik (Leif) on his side, shewed them hospitality, and bade the crews of these two ships home, for the winter, to his own house at Brattahlid. This the merchants accepted, and thanked him. Then were their goods removed to Brattahlid; there was no want of large out-houses to keep the goods in, neither plenty of every thing that was required, wherefore they were well satisfied in the winter. But towards Yule Erik (Leif) began to be silent, and was less cheerful than he used to be. One time turned Karlsefne towards Erik (Leif) and said: "Hast thou any sorrow, Erik, my friend? people think to see that thou art less cheerful than thou wert wont to be; thou hast entertained us with the greatest splendour, and we are bound to return it to thee with such services as we

* A. D. 1006.

† This is evidently a misnomer throughout the Saga, and should be LEIF, who was now in possession of the paternal estate, his father Erik having died, as stated in the former narrative, the winter after Leif's return from Vinland (1001), and consequently, five years previous to the events recorded here. The Saga of Erik the Red, it must be recollected, appears to have been written in Greenland, and that of Thorfinn Karlsefne, in Iceland, which will account for this and other discrepancies between the two narratives.

‡ Styrimenn.

can command; say now, what troubles thee?" Erik (Leif) answered: "Ye are friendly and thankful, and I have no fear as concerns our intercourse, that ye will feel the want of attention; but, on the other hand, I fear that when ye come elsewhere it will be said that ye have never passed a worse Yule than that, which now approaches, when Erik the Red entertained ye at Brattahlid, in Greenland." "It shall not be so, Yeoman!"* said Karlsefne; "we have in our ship, both malt and corn; take as much as thou desirest thereof, and make ready a feast as grand as thou wilt!" This Erik (Leif) accepted, and now preparation was made for the feast of Yule, and this feast was so grand that people thought they had hardly ever seen the like pomp in a poor land. And after Yule, Karlsefne disclosed to Erik (Leif) that he wished to marry Gudrid, for it seemed to him, as if he must have the power in this matter. Erik answered favourably, and said that she must follow her fate, and that he had heard nothing but good of him; and it ended so that Thorfinn married Thurid† (Gudrid), and then was the feast extended: and their marriage was celebrated; and this happened at Brattahlid, in the winter.

* Bondi.

† The daughter of Thorbjörn is sometimes called Thurid and sometimes Gudrid, in this narrative; and the Editor thinks it probable that she was called by the former name during childhood, but that, afterwards, for religious reasons, the pagan name (derived from the God Thor) was laid aside, and that of Gudrid adopted in its place. Antiq. Amer. p. 136, note *a*.

EXPEDITION TO AND SETTLEMENT IN VINLAND, BY THORFINN KARLSEFNE.

A. D. 1007.

BEGINNING OF THE VINLAND VOYAGE.

7. In Brattahlid began people to talk much about, that Vinland the Good should be explored, and it was said that a voyage thither would be particularly profitable by reason of the fertility of the land; and it went so far that Karlsefne and Snorri made ready their ship to explore the land in the spring. With them went also the before-named men hight Bjarni and Thorhall, with their ship. There was a man hight Thorvard; he married Freydis, a natural daughter of Erik the Red; he went also with them, and Thorvald the son of Erik,* and Thorhall who was called the hunter ;† he had long been with Erik, and served him as huntsman in summer, and steward in winter; he was a large man, and strong, black and like a giant, silent and foul-mouthed in his speech, and always egged on‡ Erik to the worst; he was a bad Christian; he was well acquainted with uninhabited parts, he was in the ship with Thorvard and Thorvald. They had the ship which Thorbjörn had brought out [from

* Here is again evidently some confusion of names, as Thorvald Erikson's death has been previously related in the Saga of Erik the Red, and Karlsefne was now married to his widow Gudrid: it seems probable that some other Thorvald accompanied Karlsefne on this voyage. See Antiq. Amer. Præfatio, p. xiv. † Veidimadr. ‡ Eggjadi.

Iceland]. They had in all 160 men,* when they sailed to the western settlement, and from thence to Bjanney. Then sailed they two days† to the south; then saw they land, and put off boats, and explored the land, and found there great flat stones,‡ many of which were 12 ells broad: foxes were there. They gave the land a name, and called it HELLULAND.§ Then sailed they two days,‖ and turned from the south to the south-east, and found a land covered with wood, and many wild beasts upon it; an island lay there out from the land to the south-east; there killed they a bear, and called the place afterwards Bear island,¶ but the land MARKLAND. Thence sailed they far to the southward along the land, and came

* Literally "40 men and a hundred" [40 manna oh hundrad] but the great or long hundred must be understood, consisting of 12 decades, or 120. Antiq. Amer. p. 137, note *b*. Thus Tegner, describing the drinking hall of Frithiof:—

"Ei femhundrade män [til *tio tolfter* på hundrat]
Fyllde den rymliga sal, när de samlats att dricka om Julen."
Frithiofs Saga III. p. 18.

Not five hundred men (though *ten twelves* you count to the hundred),
Could fill that wide hall, when they gathered to banquet at Yule.

† 2 Dægr. ‡ Hellur storar, see ante, p. 60, note §.

§ The whole of the northern coast of America, west of Greenland, was called by the antient Icelandic geographers *Helluland it Mikla*, or Great Helluland; and the island of Newfoundland simply Helluland, or *Litla Helluland*. See Plate II. and Antiq. Amer. p. 419. ‖ 2 Dægr.

¶ Bjanney, from *Björn* a bear, gen. bjarnar, and *ey* island; hence Bjarney contracted from Bjarnarey; but the common pronunciation of the latter is Bjadney or Bjanney. Antiq. Amer. p. 138, note *c*. This would appear to have been Cape Sable Island on the S. coast of Nova Scotia, but the same name was also given by the Northmen to the present island of Disco. See supra, and Antiq. Amer. pp. 413—424.

to a ness; the land lay upon the right; there were long and sandy strands. They rowed to land, and found there upon the ness, the keel of a ship, and called the place Kjalarness,* and the strands they called Furdustrands,† for it was long to sail by them. Then became the land indented with coves;‡ they ran the ship into a cove. King Olaf Tryggvason had given Leif two Scotch people, a man hight Haki, and a woman hight Hekja; they were swifter than beasts. These people were in the ship with Karlsefne; but when they had sailed past Furdustrands, then set they the Scots on shore, and bad them run to the southward of the land, and explore its qualities, and come back again within three days.§ They had a sort of clothing which they called kjafal,‖ which was so made that

* Se ante, Saga of Erik the Red, p. 71.

† Furdustrandir, from *furda*, gen. furdu, wonderful, and *strönd*, pl. strandir, beach. This name seems to have been given to the eastern shores of the peninsula of Barnstable or Cape Cod, including Nauset, Chatham, and Monomoy beach, and to have had its origin either in the remarkably white sands mentioned by Hitchcock, or in a natural phenomenon, thus described by the same author:—"In crossing the sands of the Cape, I noticed a singular *mirage* or deception. In Orleans, for instance, we seemed to be ascending at an angle of three or four degrees; nor was I convinced that such was not the case, until turning about, I perceived that a similar ascent appeared in the road just passed over."—Antiq. Am. p. 427.

‡ Vâgskorid. § 3 Dægr.

‖ A remarkable similitude is pointed out by the Editor between this term and the Anglo-Saxon word *ceaval*, by which the Greek *κόφινος*, (a basket,) is rendered in the (Gospel of St. Matthew, c. xiv. v. 20, and St. Mark, c. vi. v. 45,) Anglo-Saxon version of the Bible. From the different inflections of the word given by Professor Rafn, namely, *cavl*, *caul*, *couuel*,—in conjunction with the description in the text, it seems also probable that the English word *cowl* is derived from the same source. Antiq. Amer. p. 140, note *a*.

a hat was on the top, and it was open at the sides, and no arms to it; fastened together between the legs, with buttons and clasps, but in other places it was open. They staid away the appointed time, but when they came back, the one had in the hand a bunch of grapes,* and the other, a new sowen ear of wheat:† these went on board the ship, and after that sailed they farther. They sailed into a frith; there lay an island before it, round which there were strong currents, therefore called they it Stream island.‡ There were so many eider ducks§ on the island, that one could scarcely walk in consequence of the eggs. They called the place Stream-frith.‖ They took their cargo from the ship, and prepared to remain there. They had with them all sorts of cattle. The country there was very beautiful. They undertook nothing but to explore the land.

* Vinberja köngul.

† Hveitiax nýsáid. This was, no doubt, the maize or Indian corn,—the "fruges non seminatas" of Adam of Bremen,—which, as well as beans, pumpkins, and squashes, were found growing in the State of Massachusetts, when first visited by the whites. See Report of Rhode Isl. Hist. Soc. Antiq. Amer. p. 368.

‡ Straumey.

§ "Eine ausserordentliche menge von wilden Gänsen und Enten, unter welchen der *Eider vogel* auf den unbewohnten Inseln häufig ist." Ebeling. Geschich. v. Amer. vi. p. 210.

‖ Straumfjord and Straumey, from *straumr* a current, *ey* island, and *fjord* frith, the former appears to have been Buzzard's Bay, and the island that of Martha's Vineyard, then probably united to Nantucket. The strong currents clearly denote the great "Gulph stream," which, rushing from the Gulph of Mexico, with impetuous force, passes between Cuba and the southern point of East Florida, where, turning northward, it shapes its course between the eastern continent and the Bahama isles, until changed again to the eastward by the shoals of Nantucket, it is finally lost among the extended barrens of Newfoundland.

They were there for the winter without having provided food beforehand. In the summer the fishing declined, and they were badly off for provisions; then disappeared Thorhall the huntsman. They had previously made prayers to God for food, but it did not come so quick as they thought their necessities required. They searched after Thorhall for three days,* and found him on the top of a rock; there he lay, and looked up in the sky, and gaped both with nose and mouth, and murmured something; they asked him why he had gone there; he said it was no business of theirs; they bade him come home with them, and he did so. Soon after, came there a whale, and they went thither, and cut it up, and no one knew what sort of whale it was; and when the cook dressed it, then ate they, and all became ill in consequence.†

* 3 Dægr. There seems to be considerable ambiguity about the Icelandic words *dagr* and *dægr*, which are arbitrarily used to express either the natural day of 24 hours, or the artificial day of 12 hours. Throughout this and the preceding narrative, *dægr* is considered by the Editor to mean the artificial day, and *dagr* the natural day, hence 2 *dægr* is rendered "a day and night" [Dan. "en Dag og en Nat"—Lat. "noctem diemque"] and 3 *dægr*, "three half natural days" (36 hours) [Dan. "tre halve Dögn." Lat. "tria nychthemerium."] But in a subsequent narrative:—(De Ario Mario Filii, Antiq. Amer. p. 211,) we find VI *dægr* rendered, in the Danish version "6 Dögn," and, in the Latin, "sex dierum," thus applying the word *dægr* to the natural day of 24 hours. Finn Magnusen, also, expressly states that the artificial day was called *dagr*, and the natural day *dægr*. See Mem. de la Soc. Roy. des Antiq. du Nord. 1836-1837, p. 165.

† This whale was probably a species of the Balæna physalis of Linnæus, which was not edible, and being rarely seen in the Greenland and Iceland seas, was unknown to the Northmen. A kind of whale called Balæna mysticetus is mentioned by Ebeling, as having been formerly found on the coasts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, re-visiting the more southern

Then said Thorhall: "The red bearded* was more helpful than your Christ; this have I got now for my verses that I sung of Thor, my protector; seldom has he deserted me." But when they came to know this, they cast the whole whale into the sea, and resigned their case to God. Then the weather improved, and it was possible to row out fishing, and they were not then in want of provisions, for wild beasts were caught on the land, and fish in the sea, and eggs collected on the island.

In the account of these transactions, given in the Saga of Erik the Red, it is stated that a son was born to Gudrid during this autumn (1007); which statement is corroborated in a subsequent part of the present narrative. The child was called Snorri, and from this first of European

latitudes in winter, and returning northwards in the spring; in after times, however, they disappeared altogether from the coasts; and in the present day the number of whales in northern latitudes has much diminished. Off the mouth of the Pettaquamscut River, in Narraganset Bay, is a rock called *Whale* Rock. See Plate I. and Antiq. Amer. p. 444.

* Thor the eldest son of Odin and Frigga, the strongest of the Aser, and next to Odin in rank.

"There sits on golden throne
Aloft the god of war,
Save Odin, yields to none
'Mongst gods great Aser, Thor."
Oehlenschläger—Pigott's Translation.

The introduction of Christianity being but recent in Iceland, many of the Northmen still believed in Thor, or embracing the new religion with a wavering faith, applied to the Aser gods in cases of difficulty. "The remains of the worship of Thor lingered longer in the North than those of any of the other Scandinavian deities. In Nial's Saga, a female Skald says to a Christian—'Do you not know that Thor has challenged your Christ to single combat, and that he dares not fight him?'" Pigott's Scandinavian Mythology, p. 101.

blood born in America, the celebrated sculptor Thorvaldson, as well as many other eminent Scandinavians, is lineally descended.*

OF KARLSEFNE AND THORHALL.

8. So is said, that Thorhall would go to the northward along Furdustrands, to explore Vinland, but Karlsefne would go southwards along the coast. Thorhall got ready, out under the island, and there were no more together than nine men; but all the others went with Karlsefne. Now when Thorhall bore water to his ship, and drank, then sung he this song: —

People told me when I came
Hither, all would be so fine;
The good Vinland, known to fame,
Rich in fruits, and choicest wine;
Now the water pail they send;
To the fountain I must bend,
Nor from out this land divine
Have I quaffed one drop of wine.

And when they were ready, and hoisted sail, then chaunted Thorhall: —

Let our trusty band
Haste to Fatherland;
Let our vessel brave,
Plough the angry wave,
While those few who love
Vinland, here may rove,
Or, with idle toil,
Fetid whales may boil,
Here on Furdustrand
Far from Fatherland.†

* See Genealogical Tables in Appendix.

† In the original all these verses bear the stamp of the 10th and 11th centuries. Antiq. Amer. p. 144, note *a*.

After that, sailed they northwards past Furdustrands, and Kjalarness, and would cruize to the westward; then came against them a strong west wind, and they were driven away to Ireland, and were there beaten, and made slaves, according to what the merchants have said.

9. Now is to be told about Karlsefne, that he went to the southward along the coast, and Snorri and Bjarni, with their people. They sailed a long time, and until they came to a river, which ran out from the land, and through a lake, out into the sea. It was very shallow, and one could not enter the river without high water. Karlsefne sailed, with his people, into the mouth, and they called the place Hóp.* They found there upon the land, self-sown fields of wheat,† there where the ground was low, but vines there where it rose somewhat. Every stream there was full of fish. They made holes there where the land commenced, and the waters rose highest; and when the tide fell, there

* I Hópi, from the Icelandic word *hópa* to recede, and may signify here, either the recess formed by the confluence of a river and the sea, or the mouth of the river, or merely the inlet of the sea into which the river falls. This description corresponds exactly with the situation of the present MOUNT HOPE BAY, through which the Taunton river flows, being connected with the sea by the Pocasset river and Seaconnet Passage (see Plate I.). Hence the name of *Hóp* given by the Northmen to this settlement, which, it is probable, was situated upon a beautiful elevation that rises above the bay, and which was afterwards called by the Indians *Mont-Haup* (pron. Hope). It appears also from a communication made to Professor Rafn by the Secretary of the Rhode Island Historical Society, that a tradition was current amongst the oldest Indians, of a wooden house swimming upon the river Assoonet (Pocasset), and containing men of another country, who fought the Indians with great success. Antiq. Amer. p. 374.

† Sjalfsana hveitiakrar. See p. 90, note †.

were sacred fish* in the holes. There were a great number of all kinds of wild beasts in the woods. They remained there a half month, and amused themselves, and did not perceive any thing [new]: they had their cattle with them. And one morning early, when they looked round, saw they a great many canoes, and poles were swung upon them, and it sounded like the wind in a straw-stack, and the swinging was with the sun. Then said Karlsefne: "What may this denote?" Snorri Thorbrandson answered him: "It may be that this is a sign of peace, so let us take a white shield, and hold it towards them;" and so did they. Upon this the others rowed towards them, and looked with wonder upon those that they met, and went up upon the land. These people were black, and ill favoured, and had coarse hair on the head; they had large eyes and broad cheeks.† They remained

* Helgir fiskar. This is supposed to have been the species of flounder or flat fish called by the English, Holibut (Pleuronectes hippoglossus Linn. Hippoglossus vulgaris Cuv.) and which is still called in Iceland "holy fish," (heilagfiski) a name given, according to Pliny, in consequence of the presence of these fish being considered to denote safe water. Speaking of the danger to be apprehended from the dog-fish, he adds: "Certissima est securitas vidisse *planos pisces*, quia nunquam sunt, ubi maleficæ bestiæ: qua de causa urinantes *sacros* appellant eos."—Hist. Nat. Lib. ix. The Report of the Rhode Island Historical Society states that "The flat fish, and most of the Pleuronectes, including the Holibut, frequent our waters;" and Warden says:—"Il y a une grande abondance de poissons de presque toutes les especes. On en voit jusqu' à quatre-vingts differentes au marché de Newport. La morue, *le flétau*, l'esturgeon, l'alose, et d'autres poissons fourmillent autour des iles Nantucket." I. pp. 508. 261. Ebeling also says:—"Alle Flüsse sind sehr fischreich." See Antiq. Amer. pp. 148, 367, 445.

† This description of the Skrælings corresponds exactly with the appearance of the present Esquimaux.

there for a time, and gazed upon those that they met, and rowed, afterwards, away to the southward, round the ness.

10. Karlsefne and his people had made their dwellings above the lake, and some of the houses were near the water, others more distant. Now were they there for the winter; there came no snow, and all their cattle fed themselves on the grass.* But when spring† approached, saw they one morning early, that a number of canoes rowed from the south round the ness; so many, as if the sea was sowen with coal: poles were also swung on each boat. Karlsefne and his people then raised up the shield, and when they came together, they began to barter; and these people would rather have red cloth [than any thing else]; for this they had to offer skins and real furs. They would, also, purchase swords and spears, but this Karlsefne and Snorri forbad. For an entire fur skin the Skrælings took a piece of red cloth, a span long, and

* "Most winters a scanty subsistence might be procured by cattle; but this is not depended on. Farmers generally house their cattle in winter; but whether this was formerly the case or not, we cannot say: we do not consider it absolutely necessary; although a prudent husbandman will do it. Some individuals in that vicinity, do not shelter their sheep, and say they thrive well and become robust. On the island of Nantucket, east of Martha's Vineyard, one of the most bleak, sterile, and to the agriculturist, forbidding spots we have, the sheep are not, and have not been, since its first settlement, housed or protected in any manner whatever. Severe winters, of course, hundreds die of cold and hunger. In the Narraganset country, situated west of the Bay, sheep are sometimes kept in the open air through the winter season."—Rep. of Rhode Island Hist. Society, Antiq. Amer. p. 368. Compare ante, p. 64,

† A.D. 1009.

bound it round their heads. Thus went on their traffic for a time; then the cloth began to fall short among Karlsefne and his people, and they cut it asunder into small pieces, which were not wider than the breadth of a finger, and still the Skrælings gave just as much for that as before, and more.

The Saga of Erik the Red, in giving an account of this transaction, adds that Karlsefne, on the cloth being expended, hit upon the expedient of making the women take out milk porridge to the Skrælings, who, as soon as they saw this new article of commerce, would buy the porridge and nothing else. "Thus," says the Saga, "the traffic of the Skrælings was wound up by their bearing away their purchases in their stomachs, but Karlsefne and his companions retained their goods and skins."*

11. It happened that a bull, which Karlsefne had, ran out from the wood and roared aloud; this frightened the Skrælings, and they rushed to their canoes, and rowed away to the southward, round the coast: after that they were not seen for three entire weeks. But at the end of that time, a great number of Skrælings' ships were seen coming from the south like a rushing torrent; all the poles were turned from the sun, and they all howled very loud. Then took Karlsefne's people a red shield, and held it towards them. The Skrælings jumped out of their ships, and after this, went they against each other, and fought. There was a sharp shower of weapons, for the Skrælings had slings.† Karl-

* Antiq. Amer. pp. 59-60.

† Valslöngur.

sefne's people saw that they raised up on a pole, an enormous large ball, something like a sheep's paunch, and of a blue colour; this swung they from the pole over Karlsefne's men, upon the ground, and it made a frightful crash as it fell down.* This caused great alarm to Karlsefne and all his people, so that they thought of nothing but running away, and they fell back along the river, for it appeared to them that the Skrælings pressed upon them from all sides; and they did not stop until they came to some rocks, where they made a stout resistance. Freydis came out and saw that Karlsefne's people fell back, and she cried out: "Why do ye run, stout men as ye are, before these miserable wretches, whom I thought ye would knock down like cattle? and if I had weapons, methinks I could fight better than any of ye." They gave no heed to her words. Freydis would go with them, but she was slower, because she was pregnant; however she followed after them into the wood. The Skrælings pursued her; she found a dead man before her; it was Thorbrand Snorrason, and there stood a flat stone stuck in his head; the sword lay naked by his side; this took she up, and prepared to defend herself. Then came the Skrælings towards her; she drew out her breasts

* The nature of this missile does not exactly appear, but it probably had some affinity with the harpoon used by the Esquimaux in fishing, and to which is attached a bladder, as well for the purpose of directing the weapon, as of marking its position after having been thrown. In the present instance, stones would appear to have been added to this contrivance. Antiq. Amer. p. 152, note *b*.

from under her clothes, and dashed them against the naked sword; by this the Skrælings became frightened, and ran off to their ships, and rowed away. Karlsefne and his people then came up, and praised her courage. Two men fell on Karlsefne's side, but a number of the Skrælings. Karlsefne's band was overmatched, and they now drew home to their dwellings, and bound their wounds; and they thought over what crowd that could have been, which had pressed upon them from the land side, and it now appeared to them that it could scarcely have been real people from the ships, but that these must have been optical illusions.* The Skrælings found also a dead man, and an axe lay by him; one of them took up the axe, and cut wood with it, and now one after another did the same, and thought it was an excellent thing, and bit well; after that one took it, and cut at a stone, so that the axe broke, and then thought they it was of no use, because it would not cut stone, and they threw it away.

12. Karlsefne and his people now thought they saw, that although the land had many good qualities, still would they be always exposed there to the fear of hostilities from the earlier inhabitants. They proposed, therefore, to depart, and return to their own country. They sailed northwards along the coast, and found five Skrælings clothed in skins, sleeping near the sea. They had with them vessels containing animal marrow mixed with blood.

* Sjónhverfingar.

Karlsefne's people thought they understood that these men had been banished from the land: they killed them. After that came they to a ness,* and many wild beasts were there, and the ness was covered all over with dung, from the beasts which had lain there during the night.† Now came they back to Straumfjord,‡ and there was abundance of every thing that they wanted to have. *It is some mens say, that Bjarni and Gudrid remained behind, and* 100 *men with them, and did not go further; but that Karlsefne and Snorri went southwards, and* 40 *men with them, and were not longer in Hope than barely two months, and, the same summer, came back.*§ Karlsefne went then with one ship to seek after Thorhall the hunter, but the rest remained behind, and they sailed northwards past Kjalarness, and thence westwards, and the land was upon their larboard‖ hand; there were wild woods over all, as far as they could see, and scarcely

* Perhaps Chippinoxet Point. This would appear to allude to a short expedition made up Narragansett Bay, after their departure from Hope. See Plate I.

† "Numerous animals formerly inhabited these parts, particularly the Deer (Cervus Virginianus), Fox, both red and gray (Canis Vulpes, fulvus et Virginianus), Wolf (Canis Lupus occidentalis), Woodchuck (Arctomys monax)... the Weasel (Mustela), Skunk (Mephitis Americ.) Wolverine (Gulo luscus), and the Black Bear (Ursus Americ.). A great variety of other animals were common here before the woods were cleared, and the State very generally settled."—Rep. Rhode Isl. Hist. Soc. Antiq. Amer. p. 364.

‡ A. D. 1009.

§ This passage is evidently the statement of an imperfect tradition, to which the writer of the Saga gave no credit; and although only involving a question of *time*, it must be rejected as inconsistent with the previous details: its insertion, however, is strongly characteristic of the candour and honesty of the writer, who is obviously desirous of stating all that he has heard upon the subject.

‖ Bakborda.

any open places. And when they had long sailed, a river fell out of the land from east to west; they put in to the mouth of the river, and lay by its southern bank.

DEATH OF THORVALD ERIKSON.

13. It happened one morning that Karlsefne and his people saw, opposite an open place in the wood, a speck which glistened in their sight, and they shouted out towards it, and it was a uniped,* which thereupon hurried down to the bank of the river, where they lay. Thorvald Erikson stood at the helm, and the uniped shot an arrow into his bowels. Thorvald drew out the arrow, and said: "It has killed me!—to a fruitful land have we come, but hardly shall we enjoy any benefit from it." Thorvald soon after died of this wound.† Upon this the uniped ran away to the northward; Karlsefne and his people went after him, and saw him now

* Einfoetingr, from *ein*, one, and *fótr foot*. This term appears to have been given by antient writers to some of the Indian tribes, in consequence of the peculiarity of their dress, which Wormskiold describes as a triangular cloth, hanging down so low, both before and behind, that the feet were concealed. In an old miscellaneous work, called *Rimbegla*, published at Copenhagen in 1780, a people of this denomination, inhabiting Blaland in Ethiopia, are thus described:—"Einfoetingar hafa svà mikinn fót vid jord, at their skyggja sér med honum vid solarhita i svefni," i. e. says Professor Rafn:—"Unipedes plantam pedis tam amplam habent, ut ipsis dormientibus sit umbraculi." Antiq. Amer. p. 158, note *a*.

† This is either an incorrect version of the death of Thorvald Erikson, which is given in the Saga of Erik the Red, pp. 72-73, or an account of the fate of some other Thorvald, who accompanied the expedition.

and then, and the last time they saw him, he ran out into a bay. Then turned they back, and a man chaunted these verses:—

The people chased
A Uniped
Down to the beach,
But lo! he ran
Straight o'er the sea—
Hear thou, Thorfinn!

They drew off then, and to the northward, and thought they saw the country of the Unipeds; they would not then expose their people any longer. They looked upon the mountain range that was at Hope; and that which they now found, as all one,* and it also appeared to be equal length from Straumfjord to both places. The third winter† were they in Straumfjord. They now became much divided by party feeling, and the women were the cause of it, for those who were unmarried would injure those that were married, and hence arose great disturbance. There was born the first autumn,‡ Snorri, Karlsefne's son, and he was three years old when they went away. When they sailed from Vinland they had a south wind, and came then to Markland, and found there five Skrælings, and one was bearded; two were females, and two boys; they took the boys, but the others escaped, and the Skrælings sank down

* Probably the Blue Hills in Norfolk county, which stretch from Milton southwards towards the Taunton river. See Plate I.

† A. D. 1009-1010.

‡ A. D. 1007, see ante p. 92.

in the ground.* These two boys took they with them; they taught them the language, and they were baptized. They called their mother Vathelldi, and their father Uvæge. They said that two kings ruled over the Skrælings, and that one of them was hight Avalldania, but the other Valldidida. They said that no houses were there; people lay in caves or in holes. They said there was a land on the other side, just opposite their country, where people lived who wore white clothes, and carried poles before them, and to these were fastened flags, and they shouted loud; and people think that this was WHITE-MAN'S-LAND, OR GREAT IRELAND.†

14. Bjarni Grimolfson was driven with his ship, into the Irish ocean, and they came into a worm-sea,‡ and straightway began the ship to sink under them. They had a boat which was smeared with seal oil, for the sea-worms do not attack that; they went into the boat, and then saw that it could not hold them all; then said Bjarni: "Since the boat cannot give room to more than the half of our men,

* Probably retired into caves where they dwelt. See infra.

† Hvitramannaland eda Irland ed mykla. See Minor Narratives, Part III.

‡ Madksjó. Probably waters infested with the *teredo navalis*, from which the ships of Columbus received such injury in a more southern latitude. "The seamen were disheartened by the constant opposition of the winds and currents, and by the condition of the ships, which were pierced on all parts, by the *teredo* or worm." Irving's Columbus, p. 287. "Continuing along the coast eastward, he was obliged to abandon one of the caravels in the harbour of Puerto Bello, being so pierced by the *teredo*, that it was impossible to keep her afloat." Ib. p. 303. The *teredo navalis* and its destructive effects may still be seen on the south coast of Ireland.

it is my counsel that lots should be drawn, for those to go in the boat, for it shall not be according to rank." This thought they all so high-minded an offer, that no one would speak against it; they then did so that lots were drawn, and it fell upon Bjarni to go in the boat, and the half of the men with him, for the boat had not room for more. But when they had gotten into the boat, then said an Icelandic man, who was in the ship, and had come with Bjarni from Iceland: "Dost thou intend, Bjarni, to separate from me here?" Bjarni answered: "So it turns out." Then said the other: "Very different was thy promise to my father, when I went with thee from Iceland, than thus to abandon me, for thou said'st that we should both share the same fate." Bjarni replied: "It shall not be thus; go thou down into the boat, and I will go up into the ship, since I see that thou art so desirous to live." Then went Bjarni up into the ship, but this man down into the boat, and after that continued they their voyage, until they came to Dublin in Ireland,* and told there these things; but it is most people's belief that Bjarni and his companions were lost in the worm-sea, for nothing was heard of them since that time.

* At this period the Northmen were still numerous in the sea-port towns of Ireland, Sitric the Dane being King of Dublin. See Moore, Vol. II. p. 105.

POSTERITY OF KARLSEFNE AND THURID HIS WIFE.

15. The next summer* went Karlsefne to Iceland, and Gudrid with him, and he went home to Reynisness. His mother thought that he had made a bad match, and therefore was Gudrid not at home the first winter. But when she observed that Gudrid was a distinguished woman, went she home, and they agreed very well together. The daughter of Snorri Karlsefnesson was Hallfrid, mother to Bishop Thorlak Runolfson. They had a son who Thorbjörn hight, his daughter hight Thorunn, mother to Bishop Björn. Thorgeir hight the son of Snorri Karlsefnesson, father to Yngvild, mother of Bishop Brand the first. A daughter of Snorri Karlsefnesson was also Steinum, who married Einar, son of Grundarketil, son of Thorvald Krok, the son of Thorer, of Espihol; their son was Thorstein Ranglatr; he was father to Gudrun, who married Jörund of Keldum; their daughter was Halla, mother to Flose, father of Valgerde, mother of Herr Erlend Sterka, father of Herr Hauk the Lagman.† Another daughter of Flose was Thordis, mother of Fru Ingigerd the rich; her daughter was Fru Hallbera, Abbess of Stad at Reinisness. Many other great men in Iceland are descended from Karlsefne and Thurid, who are not here mentioned. God be with us! Amen!

* A.D. 1011. In another narrative of Karlsefne, which follows the present in the Antiquitates Americanæ, as well as in the short account of these same occurrences contained in the Saga of Erik the Red, it is stated that Karlsefne passed the winter of 1010 at Eriksfjord in Greenland. Compare Antiq. Amer. pp. 64-183.

† Hauk Erlendson, the last contributor to the Landnámabók. See pp. xi-82.

VOYAGE OF FREYDIS, HELGI, AND FINNBOGI.

A. D. 1011.

FREYDIS CAUSES THE BROTHERS TO BE KILLED.*

6. Now began people again to talk about expeditions to Vinland, for voyages thereto appeared both profitable and honourable. The same summer that Karlsefne came from Vinland,† came also a ship from Norway to Greenland; this ship steered two brothers, Helgi and Finnbogi, and they remained for the winter in Greenland. These brothers were Icelanders by descent, and from Austfjord. It is now to be told that Freydis, Erik's daughter, went from her home at Garde to the brothers Helgi and Finnbogi, and bade them that they should sail to Vinland with their vessels, and go halves with her in all the profits which might be there made. To this they agreed. Then went she to Leif her brother, and begged him to give her the houses, which he had caused to be built in Vinland; but he answered the same as before, that he would lend the houses, but not give them. So was it settled between the brothers and Freydis, that each should

* This narrative is contained in the Saga of Erik the Red (Antiq. Amer. p. 65, seq.) but has been transferred to this place, as well to make the chronological order of the various voyages more perspicuous, as on account of the further particulars relating to Karlsefne and Gudrid, with which it concludes.

† A. D. 1010. See ante, p. 61.

have thirty fighting men in the ship, besides women. But Freydis broke this agreement, and had five men more, and hid them; so that the brothers knew not of it before they came to Vinland. Now sailed they into the sea, and had before arranged that they should keep together, if it could so be, and there was little difference, but still came the brothers somewhat before, and had taken up their effects to Leif's houses. But when Freydis came to land, then cleared they out their ships, and bore up their goods to the house. Then said Freydis: "Why bring ye in your things here?" "Because we believed," said they, "that the whole agreement should stand good between us." "To me lent Leif the houses," quoth she, "and not to you." Then said Helgi: "In malice are we brothers easily excelled by thee." Now took they out their goods, and made a separate building, and set that building further from the strand, on the edge of a lake, and put all around in good order: but Freydis had trees cut down for her ship's loading. Now began winter, and the brothers proposed to set up sports, and have some amusement. So was done for a time, until evil reports and discord sprung up amongst them, and there was an end of the sports, and nobody came from the one house to the other, and so it went on for a long time during the winter. It happened one morning early that Freydis got up from her bed, and dressed herself, but took no shoes or stockings; and the weather was such that much dew had fallen. She took her

husband's cloak, and put it on, and then went to the brothers' house, and to the door; but a man had gone out a little before, and left the door half open. She opened the door, and stood a little time in the opening, and was silent; but Finnbogi lay inside the house, and was awake; he said: "What wilt thou here, Freydis?" She said: "I wish that thou wouldest get up, and go out with me, for I will speak with thee." He did so; they went to a tree, that lay near the dwellings, and sat down there. "How art thou satisfied here?" said she; he answered: "Well think I of the land's fruitfulness, but ill do I think of the discord that has sprung up betwixt us, for it appears to me that no cause has been given." "Thou sayest as it is," said she, "and so think I; but my business here with thee, is that I wish to change ships with thy brother, for ye have a larger ship than I, and it is my wish to go from hence." "That must I agree to," said he, "if such is thy wish." Now with that they separated; she went home, and Finnbogi to his bed. She got into the bed with cold feet, and thereby woke Thorvard, and he asked why she was so cold and wet. She answered, with much vehemence: "I was gone," said she, "to the brothers, to make a bargain with them about their ship, for I wished to buy the large ship; but they took it so ill, that they beat me, and used me shamefully; but thou! miserable man! wilt surely, neither avenge my disgrace or thine own, and it is easy to see that I am no longer in Greenland, and

I will separate from thee if thou avengest not this." And now could he no longer withstand her reproaches, and bade his men to get up, with all speed, and take their arms; and so did they, and went straightway to the brothers' house, and went in, and fell upon them sleeping, and then took and bound them, and thus led out one after the other; but Freydis had each of them killed, as he came out. Now were all the men there killed, and only women remained, and them would no one kill. Then said Freydis: "Give me an axe!" So was done; upon which she killed the five women that were there, and did not stop until they were all dead. Now they went back to their house after this evil work, and Freydis did not appear otherwise than as if she had done well, and spoke thus to her people: "If it be permitted us to come again to Greenland," said she, "I will take the life of that man who tells of this business; now should we say this, that they remained behind when we went away." Now early in the spring made they ready the ship that had belonged to the brothers, and loaded it with all the best things they could get, and the ship could carry. After that they put to sea, and had a quick voyage, and came to Eriksfjord with the ship early in the summer. Now Karlsefne was there, and had his ship quite ready for sea, and waited for a fair wind; and it is generally said, that no richer ship has ever gone from Greenland than that which he steered.

OF FREYDIS.

7. Freydis repaired now to her dwelling, which, in the meantime, had stood uninjured; she gave great gifts to all her companions, that they should conceal her misdeeds, and sat down now in her house. All were not, however, so mindful of their promises to conceal their crimes and wickedness but that it came out at last. Now finally it reached the ears of Leif, her brother, and he thought very ill of the business. Then took Leif three men of Freydis's band, and tortured them to confess the whole occurrence, and all their statements agreed. "I like not," said Leif, "to do that to Freydis, my sister, which she has deserved, but this will I predict, that thy posterity will never thrive." Now the consequence was, that no one, from that time forth, thought otherwise than ill of them. Now must we begin from the time when Karlsefne got ready his ship, and put to sea: he had a prosperous voyage, and came safe and sound to Norway, and remained there for the winter, and sold his goods, and both he and his wife were held in great honor by the most respectable men in Norway. But the spring after, fitted he out his ship for Iceland; and when he was all ready, and his ship lay at the bridge, waiting for a fair wind, then came there a southern to him, who was from Bremen in Saxony, and wanted to buy from Karlsefne his house broom.*

* Húsasnotru. Some doubts have arisen as to the meaning of this word, which Finn Magnusen thinks, is here intended to express a vane or weather-

"I will not sell it," said he. "I will give thee a half mark gold for it," said the German. Karlsefne thought this was a good offer, and they closed the bargain. The southern went off with the house broom, but Karlsefne knew not what wood it was; but that was mausur,* brought from Vinland. Now Karlsefne put to sea, and came with his ship to Skagafjord, on the northern coast, and there was the ship laid up for the winter. But in spring bought he Glaumbæland, and fixed his dwelling there, and lived there, and was a highly respected man, and from him and Gudrid his wife has sprung a numerous and distinguished race. And when Karlsefne was dead, took Gudrid the management of the house with her son Snorri, who was born in Vinland. But when Snorri was married, then went Gudrid abroad, and travelled southwards, and came back again to the house of Snorri her son, and then had he caused a church to be built at Glaumbæ. After this, became Gudrid a nun and

cock, such appendages having been formerly ornamented by the Northmen, at great cost, and placed on the top of the house. The price given (about £16. sterling) is also more accordant with this interpretation. Torfæus calls it "coronis domus," which seems to imply some ornamental appendage of the kind: the Editor has followed the Lexicon of Björn Haldorson. See Antiq. Amer. p. 441, note *c.* and Lexicon Islandico-Latino-Danicum Biörnonis Haldorsonii ex manuscriptis Legati Arna Magnæani cura, R. K. Raskii editum. Hafniæ, 1814, 4to.

* This is supposed to have been one of those beautiful varieties of the red maple (acer rubrum) or sugar maple (acer saccharinum) called "bird's eye," or "curled maple," and which, according to Dr. Webb, "is found in Massachusetts, and thought by many to rival the finest mahogany." Antiq. Amer. p. 367. The old German name for maple of *maasholderbaum*, as well as the Swedish *masur* speckled wood, and *masurerad*, applied to old and knotty or marble-like wood, tends also to confirm this supposition.

recluse, and remained so whilst she lived. Snorri had a son who Thorgeir hight; he was father to Ingveld, mother of Bishop Brand. The daughter of Snorri Karlsefnesson hight Hallfrid; she was mother to Runolf, father to Bishop Thorlak.* Björn hight a son of Karlsefne and Gudrid; he was father to Thorunn, mother of Bishop Bjarn. A numerous race are descended from Karlsefne, and distinguished men; and Karlsefne has accurately related to all men the occurrences on all these voyages, of which somewhat is now recited here.

* "To the learned Bishop Thorlak Runolfson," says Professor Rafn, "we are principally indebted for the oldest ecclesiastical code of Iceland, published in the year 1123; and it is also probable that the accounts of these voyages were originally compiled by him." Antiq. Amer. Abstract of Hist. Evid. p. xxxiv.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES,

IN

ANTIENT ICELANDIC MSS.

B.—Fragment of Vellum Codex, No. 192, 8vo. Antiq. Amer. p. 290.

Supposed to have been written about the end of the 14th Century.

Next to Denmark is the lesser Sweden, then is Oeland, then Gottland, then Helsingeland, then Vermeland, and the two Kvendlands, which lie to the north of Bjarmeland. From Bjarmeland stretches uninhabited land towards the north, until Greenland begins. South of Greenland is Helluland; next lies Markland; thence it is not far to Vinland the Good, which some think goes out from Africa;* and if it be so, the sea must run in between Vinland and Markland. It is related that Thorfinn Karlsefne cut wood here to ornament his house,† and went afterwards to seek out Vinland the Good, and came there, where they thought the land was, but did not effect the knowledge of it, and gained none of the riches of the land. Leif the Lucky first discovered Vinland, and then he met some merchants in distress, at sea, and, by

* Hence may be seen how far *southwards* the Northmen considered the newly discovered land to extend.

† Húsasnotrutré. See ante p. 111, and note. The word húsasnotru, says Professor Rafn, may be rendered scopis, tritonibus, or ventilogiis. Antiq. Amer. p. 291, note *d*.

God's mercy, saved their lives; and he introduced Christianity into Greenland, and it spread itself there, so that a Bishop's seat was established in the place called Gardar. England and Scotland are an island, and yet each is a kingdom for itself. Irland is a great island. Iceland is also a great island north of Irland. These countries are all in that part of the world, which is called Europe.

C. GRIPLA.*

CODEX, No. 115, 8vo. Antiq. Amer. p. 293.

Bavaria is bounded by Saxony; Saxony is bounded by Holstein, then comes Denmark; the sea flows through the eastern countries. Sweden lies to the east of Denmark, Norway to the north; Finmark north of Norway; thence stretches the land out to the north-east and east, until you come to Bjarmeland; this land is tributary to Gardarige. From Bjarmeland lie uninhabited places all northward to that land which is called Greenland, [*which, however, the Greenlanders do not confirm, but believe to have observed that it is otherwise, both from drift timber, which it is known, is cut down by men, and*

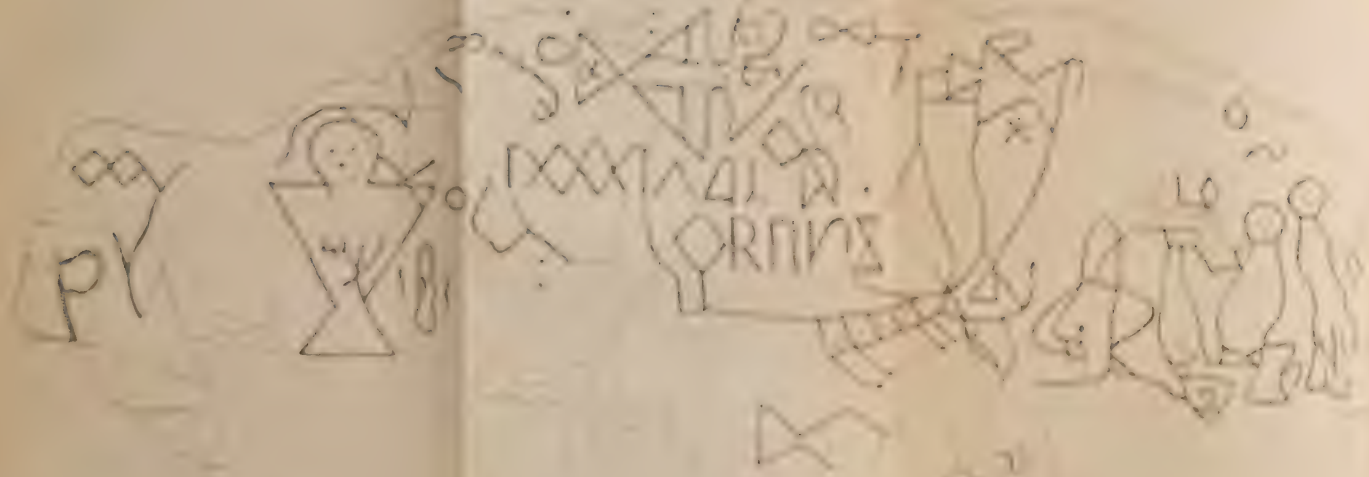
* This remarkable geographical fragment is contained in the celebrated Greenlandic collection of Björn Johnson, and was evidently written before the time of Columbus. The name is supposed to be derived from the word *gripa*, to snatch, the collection being of a miscellaneous character. Antiq. Amer. pp. 280-1.

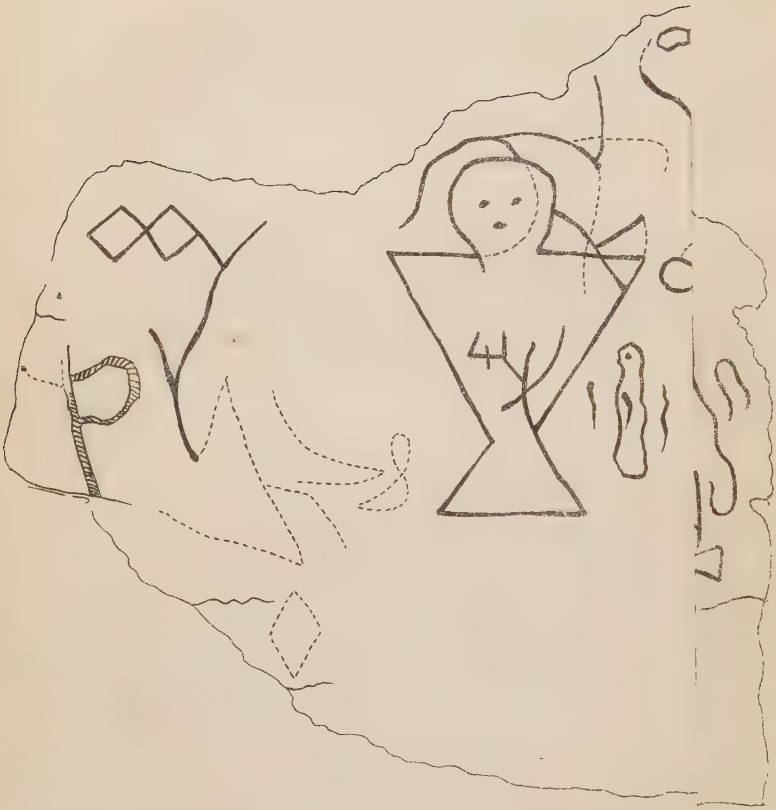
also from Reindeer, which have marks upon the ears, or bands upon the horns, likewise from sheep, which stray thither, of which there now are remains in Norway, for one head hangs in Throndhjem, another in Bergen, and many more besides are to be found].* But there are bays, and the land stretches out toward the south-west; there are Jökels and Fjords; there lie islands out before the Jökels; one of the Jökels cannot be explored; to the other is half a month's sail, to the third a week's sail; this is nearest to the settlement hight Hvidserk; thence stretches the land toward the north; but he who wishes not to miss the settlement, steers to the south-west. Gardar hight the Bishop's seat at the bottom of Eriksfjord; there is a church dedicated to the holy Nicholas; XII churches are upon Greenland in the eastern settlement, IIII in the western.

Now is to be told what lies opposite Greenland, out from the bay, which was before named: Furdustrandir hight a land; there are so strong frosts that it is not habitable, so far as one knows; south from thence is Helluland, which is called Skrælingsland; from thence it is not far to Vinland the Good, which some think goes out from Africa; between Vinland and Greenland is Ginnungagap,† which flows from the sea called Mare oceanum, and surrounds the whole earth [*Hæc verbotenus Gripla*].

* The whole of this passage is considered by Professor Rafn to be an interpolation by Björn Johnson, or some other commentator. Antiq. Amer. p. 294, note *a*.

† Davis's Straits. See Plate III.





Arcadia

PART II.

MONUMENTS & INSCRIPTIONS,

CORROBORATIVE OF THE

DISCOVERIES OF THE NORTHMEN.

PART II.

MONUMENTS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

THE DIGHTON WRITING ROCK.

Some remarkable monuments and inscriptions have been found on the eastern shores of North America, which bear testimony to the voyages and settlements recorded in the preceding narratives, and complete the mass of evidence that has been so ably brought forward by Professor Rafn, upon this interesting subject. The Rhode Island Historical Society have applied themselves to the examination of these remains, with a degree of zeal and ability worthy of the occasion, and details of high interest and value have been made known to the corresponding Danish members, through the medium of the distinguished American secretary, Dr. Webb. From these communications it appears that, in the western part of the county of Bristol in the State of Massachusetts, may still be seen numerous and extensive mounds, similar to the tumuli that are so often met with in Scandinavia, Tartary, and Russia; "also the remains of fortifications that must have required for their construction, a degree of industry, labour, and skill, as well as an advance-

ment in the arts, that never characterized any of the Indian tribes. Various articles of pottery are found in them, with the method of manufacturing which they were entirely unacquainted. But above all, many rocks, inscribed with unknown characters, apparently of very antient origin, have been discovered scattered through different parts of the country: rocks, the constituent parts of which are such as to render it almost impossible to engrave on them such writings without the aid of iron, or other hard metallic instrument. The Indians were ignorant of the existence of these rocks; and the manner of working with iron they learned from the Europeans, after the settlement of the country by the English."

Of such remains, the most important that has yet been discovered is the Assonet rock, or "Dighton writing rock," which is thus described in the Report of a Committee that was appointed by the Rhode Island Historical Society, to examine and report upon this remarkable stone, and who visited it in the month of February, 1830:—

"It is situated six and a half miles south of Taunton, on the east side of Taunton river, a few feet from the shore, and on the west side of Assonet neck, in the town of Berkely, county of Bristol, and Commonwealth of Massachusetts; although, probably from the fact of its being generally visited from the other side of the river, which is in Dighton, it has always been known by the name of the 'Dighton Writing Rock.' It faces north-west,

towards the bed of the river, and is covered by the water two or three feet at the highest, and is left ten or twelve feet from it at the lowest tides: it is also completely immersed twice in twenty-four hours. The rock does not occur *in situ,* but shews indubitable evidence of having occupied the spot where it now rests, since the period of that great and extensive disruption, which was followed by the transportation of immense boulders to, and a deposit of them in places at a vast distance from their original beds. It is a mass of well characterized fine grained *greywacke.* Its true colour, as exhibited by a fresh fracture, is a blueish grey. There is no rock in the immediate neighbourhood that would at all answer as a substitute for the purpose for which the one bearing the inscription was selected, as they are aggregates of the large conglomerate variety. Its face, measured at the base, is eleven feet and a half; and in height, it is a little rising five feet. The upper surface forms, with the horizon, an inclined plane of about sixty degrees. The whole of the face is covered, to within a few inches of the ground, with unknown hieroglyphics. There appears little or no method in the arrangement of them. The lines are from half an inch to an inch in width; and in depth sometimes one-third of an inch, though generally very superficial. They were, inferring from the rounded elevations, and intervening depressions, picked in upon the rock, and not chiselled or smoothly cut out. The marks of human power, and manual labour are indelibly

stamped upon it. No one who examines attentively the workmanship, will believe it to have been done by the Indians. Moreover, it is a well attested fact, that no where, throughout our wide spread domain, is there a single instance of their recording, or having recorded, their deeds or history on stone."*

This remarkable monument had long been an object of interest to American antiquaries, and several drawings and examinations were made of the rock and inscription, at various periods, beginning in the year 1680, but without any satisfactory result; and it remained for Professors Finn Magnusen and Rafn to shew that the whole was a *Runic inscription*, containing various cryptographs, and rude combinations of figures illustrative of the settlements of the Northmen, among which devices, may be yet traced the name of THORFINN, and the figures CXXXI. being the number of Karlsefne's associates (151),† which after the departure of Thorhall, accompanied him to Hope.‡

* Rep. Rhode Isl. Hist. Soc. Antiq. Amer. pp. 356-358.

† Twelve Decades being reckoned to the hundred, hence, called by the Icelanders and Scandinavians *stórt hundrad* (great hundred). Antiq. Amer. p. 385. ante, p. 88, note *.

‡ See ante, p. 93. Professor Rafn has gone into an elaborate dissertation upon this inscription, proving by unanswerable arguments its Scandinavian origin. (Antiq. Amer. p. 378, seq.) In this he is fully borne out by the eminent Runologist Finn Magnusen, who shews that the whole of the apparently unmeaning hieroglyphics are illustrative of the Icelandic settlement in Hope:—The well known Runic letter Þ (Th) on the left hand, at once stamps its Scandinavian or Icelandic origin; the combined letters which follow the numerals may be decyphered N. M. the initials of norrönir menn (Northmen); the devices above this, represent the shields (p. 95),

A perspective representation of this remarkable rock, together with fac-similes of the several drawings that have been made of the inscription, ending with the most recent and accurate, made by the Committee of the Rhode Island Historical Society in 1830, are appended to the Antiquitates Americanæ;* and the analogy between these and inscriptions, which have been found both in Sweden and Iceland, is shewn by contiguous representations of the Scandinavian remains. The same plate contains also, the delineation of a curious fragment of metallic *tessera*, found near Dublin, upon which is inscribed a monogram similar to that seen upon the Assonet Rock, as well as the Runic letter ᚼ (H), shewing the Scandinavian origin of the fragment, which may be ascribed to the 9th or 10th century.

The Rhode Island Historical Society have also forwarded to Professor Rafn descriptions and delineations of several other remains which bear a striking analogy to that at Dighton; among these

under which lies a helmet reversed, indicative of peace. The figure below the name may be intended for a bullock, or some domestic animal, illustrative of their daily pursuits,—the outline of a ship is blended with these;—the figures of Gudrid and her child Snorri appear on the right; Karlsefne, protected by a shield from the attacks of the Skrælings, upon the left, while the bows, and missiles of their assailants, more particularly the large ball mentioned in page 98, are clearly discernible. Altogether the analogy which this inscription presents to those upon well known Runic monuments—the facility with which the various devices may be made to apply to the incidents and circumstances connected with the Icelandic settlement, and the distinct Roman or Latin letters which form the numerals—leave no reasonable doubt as to its being the work of the Northmen.

* See Plate III.

the Portsmouth and Tiverton Rocks form interesting subjects for examination and comparison.*

RUNIC STONE AT KINGIKTÓRSOAK.

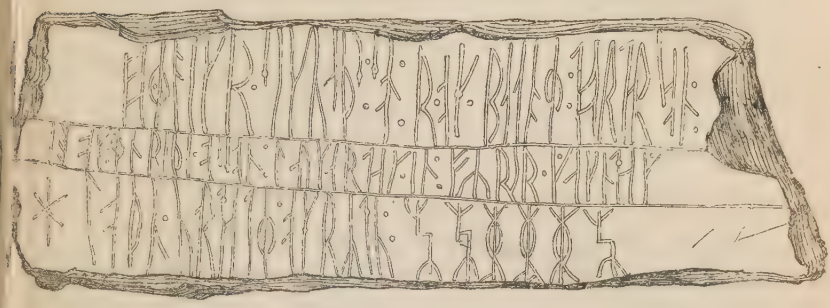
But traces of the adventurous spirit, and early voyages of the Northmen are to be found in much higher, and far less inviting latitudes, shewing the progress of their course through regions, which even in the present age of high scientific advancement, and maritime enterprise, have tested, and not unfrequently baffled the skill and hardihood of our most distinguished navigators.

In the year 1824, a remarkable Runic stone was found upon the island of Kingiktórsoak, lying in 72° 55′ north latitude and 56° 5′ west longitude.

The following is a representation of this remark-

* Since the publication of the Antiquitates Americanæ, a still further addition to American monuments has been discovered in the neighbourhood of Bahia, as appears from a communication made to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries by Dr. Lund, one of its members, residing at Lagoa Santa in Brazil:—It appears, on the authority of a Journal published by a Society lately established at Rio Janeiro, under the name of *Instituto Historico Braziliero*, that the remains of an antient city, built of hewn stone, have been recently discovered in the neighbourhood of Bahia, and that Professor Schück, one of the members of the Institution, guided by Professor Rafn's work, has deduced from the inscriptions, the Scandinavian origin of these remains. Among the ruins is stated to be a huge column, bearing a remarkable figure, which stretches out the right hand, and points with the fore-finger towards the north pole. Dr. Lund had not seen the monument at the period of his communication, but intended to undertake a journey to the place, and make a minute examination of the ruins and inscriptions, the result of which may be expected to appear in a future number of the proceedings of the Northern Antiquaries. Abstract of the proceedings of the Quarterly Meeting of the R. S. N. A. 30th April, 1840, in Berlingske politiske og Avertissements Tidende, Kjöbenhavn, May 4, 1840.

able monument which was transported to Copenhagen, and found on examination, to present a complete inscription in Runic characters :—



which in modern Icelandic orthography would run thus :—

ELLIGR · SIGVAþS : SON : R · OK : BJANNE : TORTARSON : OK : ENRIþI · ODSSON : LAUKARDAK : IN : FYRIRGAKNDAG HLOþU · VARDATE · OKRYDU : MCXXXV.

or

Erling Sighvatsson and Biarni Thordarsson, and Eindrid Oddsson, on the seventh day,* before the day of Victory,† erected these stones, and explored. MCXXXV.

Some doubts have been expressed by Runic scholars as to the signification of the characters representing the date, but the peculiar formation of the Runes, and other unerring indications shew that the inscription cannot be later than the 12th century.‡

It appears from various Icelandic documents given in Professor Rafn's work, that the Northmen

* Saturday, Dies Saturni.

† A festival kept by the Northmen previous to the 12th century : it fell on the 25th of April. Antiq. Amer. pp. 352-4.

‡ Antiq. Amer. p. 354.

had two principal stations in the Arctic regions, the one called GREIPAR, lying immediately south of the island of Disco in Davis' Straits, and the other called KRÓKSFJARDARHEIDI, situated on the north-side of Lancaster's sound.* Their general name for these regions was NORDRSETUR, to which vessels were dispatched from Greenland for the purpose of carrying on the operations of hunting and fishing. But voyages of discovery were also made in this direction; and a clear account of such an expedition, undertaken in the year 1266, follows the narratives which have been given in the preceding pages. It is contained in a letter addressed by a clergyman named Halldor, to a brother ecclesiastic named Arnold,† who, after having lived in Greenland, had become chaplain to king Magnus Lagabæter in Norway; and the voyage appears to have been made under the auspices of some clergymen of the Bishopric of Gardar in Greenland. The object of the expedition is stated to have been, to explore regions lying more to the northward than those which they had been hitherto accustomed to frequent, consequently further north than Lancaster's sound. They sailed from Króksfjardarheidi, but meeting with southerly winds, and thick weather, were obliged to let the vessel run before the wind; on the fogs clearing off, they descried several islands, and saw many seals, whales, and bears. They penetrated into the innermost part of the

* See Plate II.

† Antiq. Amer. p. 269, seq. and Abstract of Hist. Evid. p. xxxviii. seq.

gulph, and saw icebergs lying to the southward, as far as the eye could reach; they observed traces of the Skrælings having inhabited these regions in former times, but were unable to land, in consequence of the bears. They, therefore, went about, and sailed back for three days,* when they again found traces of the Esquimaux, upon some islands lying to the southward of a mountain, which they call Snæfell. After this, on St. James's Day (25th July), they proceeded southwards, a long day's rowing (einn mikin dagrödr). It froze during the night, but the sun was above the horizon both night and day; and "it was not higher when on the meridian than that, when a man lay across a six oared boat, towards the gunwale, the shade of that side of the boat which was nearest the sun, fell on his face; but at midnight was it as high as at home in the settlement, when it is in the north-west."† The expedition afterwards returned to Gardar.

These observations are of course very loose and uncertain; the relative depth of the man's position with regard to the gunwale of the boat, would be necessary in order to be able to make anything of the first observation, and the result of the other can only be deduced by presuming the day of the summer solstice to be implied. This, however, is

* III. dægr.

† "Ok var eigi hærri, þá er hún var i sudri, ef madr lagdist um þveran sexæring út at bordinu, þá bar skuggann í andlit honum af þvi bordinu, er nær var sólinni; en um midnætti var hún svá há sem heima í bygd, dá er hún er í útnordri."—Antiq. Amer. pp. 272, 273.

not an unreasonable supposition, more particularly when we find so many other circumstances corroborative of the locality which is thence determined, and Professor Rafn, proceeding upon this assumption, draws out the following result:—

> "In the 13th century, on the 25th July, the
> Sun's declination was . . 17° 54′ North
> Inclination of the Ecliptic . 23° 32′

If we now assume that the colony, and particularly the episcopal seat of Gardar, was situated on the north side of Igaliko frith, where the ruins of a large church, and of many other buildings, indicate the site of a principal settlement of the antient colony, consequently in 60° 55′ N. lat. then at the summer solstice, the height of the sun there, when in the N. W. was 3° 40′, which is equivalent to the midnight altitude of the sun on St. James's day (25th July) in the parallel of 75° 46′."* Now the parallel of 75° 46′ north latitude, would fall to the northward of Wellington Channel, the highest latitude reached by Parry in his most favourable expedition in search of a North-west passage; and the description of the land seen, and objects met with on the voyage, corresponds well with the characteristics of these regions, as given by the distinguished English navigator. The Northmen sail from Króksfjardarheidi, a name implying a frith bounded by barren highlands (heidi,) and known to be on the north side of Lancaster's sound; this frith must have

* Antiq. Amer. p. xxxix.

been of considerable extent, as *three days sailing* are specifically mentioned in that part of the narrative describing their return;—they descry several islands, and meet with many seals, whales, and bears;—they see ice-bergs lying to the southward, as far as the eye can reach;—they observe traces of the Esquimaux (Skrælings) in various directions; the sun was above the horizon both night and day, and although in the month of July, it froze during the night. There is little doubt, therefore, that these early explorers of the arctic regions, starting from Lancaster's sound, were driven through Barrow's straits, and Wellington Channel, into the Polar sea, from whence they saw the North Georgian Islands, and where they naturally fell in with a multitude of seals, whales, and bears.*

It is a startling conclusion, and somewhat mor-

* "We had the first distinct view of both sides of the sound (Lancaster's sound), that on the south side consisting of high and peaked mountains, completely snow-clad, except on the lower parts, while the northern coast has generally a smoother outline . . . the high bold land on the north side of this magnificent inlet (Lancaster's sound) . . . the magnificent view of the lofty Byam Martin mountains . . . the land had opened out on the opposite shore to the northward and westward of Cape Warrender (entrance of Barrow's straits) consisting of high mountains, and in some parts of table land . . . a great number of whales were seen in the course of this day's run . . . several black whales, and multitudes of white ones, were seen in the course of the day, also several narwhals, and seals, and one bear: there was an ice-berg in sight, (P. Regent's inlet) . . . part of the vertebræ of a whale was found at some distance from the beach, but this had probably been carried there by bears, the tracks of whom were visible on the moist soil. (Lat. 72 45′ 15″, Long. 89° 41′ 22″) . . . there was just light enough at midnight to enable us to write and read in the cabin." (Hobhouse inlet, Barrow's straits, Aug. 1819). Journals of Voyages for the discovery of a North-west passage by Sir William Edward Parry, from the years 1819 to 1825, pp. 24, 31, 33, 35, 39, 48, first Voyage, and p. 21, third Voyage, 4to. Ed.

tifying to national pride, to find that these simple navigators of the 13th century, in their humble barks, rivalled the most distinguished arctic explorers of the present day,* but however unwilling we may be to admit the evidence of a progress in maritime discovery, which tends to dim the lustre of our own enterprising age, the simple documents in support of these early voyages carry a degree of conviction to the mind which disarms scepticism, and compels us to admit their credibility.

It is a great mistake, however, to suppose that the Northmen of this period were altogether ignorant of astronomical science, and still greater, as some writers have done, to confound them with the Vikings or Pirates of a more barbarous age. The discoverers of America were MERCHANTS, their ships were called trading ships [Kaupskip]; sea-roving had been almost altogether discontinued by the Northmen before the voyages of Bjarni Herjulfson and the descendants of Erik ;† and all the expeditions which

* "Captain Parry, by the most vigilant exertions indeed, succeeded, during the brief interval of an open season, to advance from Baffin's Bay, by Lancaster's Sound, above 400 miles westward, through floating masses of ice, on the parallel of 75 degrees; but this distance is probably not the third part of the whole space between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. All the subsequent attempts of that able navigator to penetrate any further in the same direction proved unsuccessful; and his last laborious effort to reach the Pole, by dragging boats over an expanse of rough and broken ice, completely failed. The utmost exertions of the crews scarcely enabled him to proceed, in 1827, three degrees northward from Spitzbergen, and attain the latitude of 82°. 45′, not far beyond the usual resort of the Greenland whalers." Polar Seas and Regions by Sir John Leslie, Professor Jameson, and Hugh Murray, Esq. F.R.S.E. Ed. Cab. Lib. Vol. I. 4th ed. pp. 52, 53.

† Leif Erikson, it will also be remembered, was brought up and instructed by the southern German Tyrker, and Thorfinn Karlsefne was not only de-

are related in these Sagas were undertaken either for the purposes of discovering new countries, or making settlements in, or trading with, countries that had been already discovered. In the antient Icelandic work called Rimbegla, which has been before quoted, many rules are given for the measurement of time, the study of astronomy, geometry, &c. and although these are probably translations or compilations from foreign works, they correspond with what the Icelandic clergy taught their people, after the introduction of Christianity. Among these are found scientific rules for finding the course of the sun, moon, and stars, also the division of time thereon depending; information respecting the astronomical quadrant, and its proper use; different methods for ascertaining the spherical figure of the earth; the longitude and latitude of places, and of calculating their distances from each other; the sun's declination; the earth's magnitude and circumference, the times when the ocean could best be navigated, &c.*

Early in the eleventh century (1018—1026) the rich chieftain Raudulf, of Oesterdal, in Norway, taught his son Sigurd the science of computing the course of the sun and moon, and other visible celestial bodies, and particularly to know the stars which

scended from princely lineage, but had derived knowledge and experience by trading voyages to various countries in Europe, Ireland amongst the rest, where science and learning flourished long before the Northmen set foot upon her shores, but where they then held the chief sea ports. See Moore, Vol. I. p. 279.; II. p. 76.

* Finn Magnusen ap. Mem. de la Soc. des Antiq. du Nord, 1836-1837, pp. 181-182.

mark the lapse of time, that he might be able to ascertain the time both by day and by night, when neither the sun or moon were visible. Even in heathen times we have similar accounts of Icelandic chieftains and their sons, nay even of simple peasants, who paid sedulous attention to the motions of the heavenly bodies, in order from thence to ascertain the true lapse of time; also of their belief in astrology, which was intimately connected with old Scandinavian mythology. Olaus Magnus said that in his time (about 1520) it was generally acknowledged in Sweden, that the common people in antient times had more knowledge of the stars than they possessed in his days.*

Some idea may be formed of the character and acquirements of the Scandinavian merchants in the 11th and 12th centuries from the Speculum Regale, a work written in the latter period. Here the merchant is exhorted to make himself acquainted with the laws of all countries, especially those regarding commerce and navigation, as well as with foreign languages, particularly the Italian and Latin, which were then in more general use. He was also enjoined to obtain a complete knowledge of the places and motions of the heavenly bodies, the times of the day, the division of the horizon according to the cardinal and minor points, the movement of the sea, the climates, the seasons best adapted for navigation, the equipping and rigging

* Finn Magnusen ap. Mem. de la Soc. des Antiq. du Nord, 1836-1837. pp. 181-182.

of vessels, arithmetical calculation, etc. Moreover, to distinguish himself by a becoming and decorous way of living, both as to moral conduct, manners, and attire, etc.: and thus it may be safely inferred that the better educated of the northern merchants in the 10th and 11th centuries were not so inferior to their southern neighbours, as may be generally supposed.*

The extended voyages and commercial intercourse of the Northmen must have also contributed to the amelioration of their habits and character. From the 8th to the 11th centuries they carried on a more active commerce, and a more extensive maritime communication with foreign countries than any other nation in Europe. Such intercourse appears quite incompatible with that extreme degree of ignorance and barbarity in which so many writers would clothe all their actions and enterprises. England, Ireland, Italy, Sicily, France, Spain—were visited by these daring adventurers; true, in the character, and with the spirit, for the most part, of reckless invaders, but that they should have continued to return from such enterprises without exhibiting some modification of that ferocity, which might be expected to yield to the salutary influence of association with more civilized countries, seems scarcely credible. Their long continued intercourse of more than 200 years, with Ireland alone, a country which in the 8th century enjoyed a European

* Finn Magnusen, ap. Mem. des Antiq. du Nord, p. 183.

reputation for intellectual eminence,* cannot but have had a beneficial influence upon their character and habits, and we should receive with caution all

* "In the 8th century, indeed, the high reputation of the Irish for scholarship had become established throughout Europe." Moore, Vol. I. p. 289. "As Druidism fell into disrepute, Christian seminaries multiplied .... Soon after the first foundation, we read of a most noble city and seminary founded at Clonard near the Boyne. In the days of St. Finanus, A. C. 500, we find it to contain no less than 3000 scholars, among whom were some of the first eminence for piety and learning. Colgan calls it a repository of all knowledge ... About the same time, the academy of Ross, called Ross-Ailithri, in the county of Cork, was formed by St. Fachanus, as Ware notes, and Hanmer, in his Chronicle, tells us, that here St. Brandan taught the liberal arts .... The schools of Clonfert, Bangor, Rathene, Cashel, &c. were not less remarkable ... Was a man of letters missing on the continent or in Britain, it became a proverb: *Amandatus est, ad disciplinam in Hiberniâ!*" O'Halloran, Vol. I. p. 167, seq. "It is evident," says Ware, "from antient writers of undeniable credit, that there were formerly in Ireland several eminent schools, or as we now call them, Universities, to which the Irish and Britons, and at length the Gauls and Saxons flocked, as to marts of good literature; of which see Bede, Alcuin, Erik of Auxerre and the life of Sulgenus. Among these schools, as that of Armagh was the most antient, so it was the most eminent .... the names of some of the readers and prælectors thereof, even in the times of the Danish tyranny in Ireland, are still extant." Antiq. of Ireland by Sir James Ware, translated by Harris, Vol. II. pp. 240, 241. But Lismore appears to have borne the palm among the Irish seminaries, as may be collected from the lines of Bonaventura Moronus, who thus describes the crowd of foreign scholars that flocked there from all parts of Europe:—

Undique conveniunt proceres, quos dulce trahebat
Discendi studium, major num cognita virtus
An laudata foret. Celeres vastissima Rheni
Jam vada Teutonici, jam deseruere Sicambri:
Mittit ab extremo gelidos aquilone Boiemos.
Albis et Arverni cœunt, Batavique frequentes,
Et quicunque colunt alta sub rupe Gebenas
Non omnes prospectat Arar, Rhodanique fluenta
Helvetios: multos desiderat ultima Thule.
Certatim hi properant, diverso tramite ad urbem
Lismoriam, juvenis primos ubi transigit annos.

Life of St. Cathaldus, B. I.

statements upon a subject to which national or religious feeling is likely to have given an exaggerated colouring. Our knowledge of the excesses of the northern invaders is chiefly derived from the evidence of monkish chroniclers, whose Christian faith and feelings were no less outraged by the deeds than the infidelity of the Pagan ravagers, and who writing in many cases long after the events, would naturally aid defective evidence with a fervid zeal and fertile imagination. The particular periods, also, and tribes to which this brutal ferocity of the Northmen is referred, should be more clearly distinguished. The peaceful Norwegian settlers in Iceland, for instance, in the 9th century were very different from those fierce invaders, who, in the same age, shook the kingdoms of Edmund and of Alfred to their centre, and committed barbarities which have called forth the just animadversions of the distinguished historian of the Anglo-Saxons.* Flying from the despotic rule of Harald Haarfager, the Norwegian emigrants sought peace and freedom in a remote and sterile island, where the labours of the field, and the trading intercourse necessary to their isolated position, were relieved by the relaxation of innocent domestic re-

* Sharon Turner, Hist. Anglo-Saxons, Vol. I. B. iv. And yet if we are to judge by the barbarous sentence of death inflicted by Ella upon Ragnar Lodbrok, and the successive assassinations of the Northumbrian kings, the Anglo-Saxon chieftains of the 9th century would appear to have only differed from their northern assailants in exhibiting less open violence and personal daring. See Ibid. pp. 473, 507. Alberich describes the incursions of the Northmen as "modo vehementior, modo tolerabilior." Alberic. Chron. A. D. 837, p. 174.

unions, and intellectual pursuits; and although some ardent spirit, greedy of fame or plunder, or stimulated by the more honourable ambition of acquiring knowledge and experience by intercourse with foreign lands, might occasionally join the fierce band of the reckless viking, the voyages of the Icelandic Northmen were almost exclusively confined to trade, or discovery, or the formation of peaceful settlements on those shores, which their own enterprise, perseverance, and skill had opened to their connection.

It may, perhaps, be urged in disparagement of the early voyagers in the Polar Seas, that the seasons were then more favourable to arctic discoveries, than they have been in later ages, and that therefore the difficulties encountered by modern navigators, were unknown to their predecessors; but the popular belief of a milder and more genial climate having formerly prevailed in Europe, is not supported by any satisfactory evidence: indeed the opinions of scientific enquirers would lead to a directly opposite conclusion,* and there is, at least, every

* "It is very difficult to ascertain the precise condition of the weather in distant ages. The thermometer was not invented till 1590, by the celebrated Sanctorio; nor was that valuable instrument reduced to a correct standard before the year 1724, by the skill of Fahrenheit. We have hence no observations of temperature which go further back than a century. Prior to this period, we must glean our information from the loose and scanty notices which are scattered through the old chronicles relative to the state of the harvest, the quality of the vintage, or the endurance of frost and snow in the winter. Great allowance, however, should be made for the spirit of exaggeration and the tone of the marvellous which infect all these rude historical monuments. On glancing over the incidental notices of the state of the weather, it is obvious that *no material change has*

reason to believe that the periodical changes, which so often call forth complaints, and retrospective comparisons from the aged and infirm, respecting the altered condition of the seasons in the present day, were not less frequent or severe in those favoured periods on which their praises are bestowed.

The supposed settlement on the eastern coast of Greenland, (Eystribygd) now nearly inaccessible, has tended to give currency to the popular notion of a less rigorous climate prevailing in those regions, at the period of the Icelandic emigration to that coast, but the able and arduous investigation of Captain Graah has dispelled that illusion, and there is now little doubt, that the so called *eastern settlement* extended little further than the south-eastern point of the Greenland coast, the chief and almost only habitations being seated upon the western shore.*

taken place for the last thousand years in the climate of Europe; but we may conjecture that it has gradually acquired rather a milder character; at least, instances of excessive severity appear on the whole to be of rarer occurrence .... If the climate had undergone any real change in the more temperate parts of Europe, a corresponding alteration, with very distinct features, must inevitably have taken place in the Arctic regions. But a dispassionate enquiry discovers no circumstances, which at all clearly point at such a conclusion." Sir John Leslie, Profess. Nat. Phil. Univer. Edinb. ap. "Polar Seas and Regions." Ed. Cab. Lib. Vol. I. pp. 55-57.

* Captain Graah of the Danish Navy was commissioned by his government to explore the east coast of Greenland in 1828, and determine the long mooted question of the locality of the Eystribygd, but after a most perilous and difficult expedition he reached the latitude of 65° 18′ N. without finding "the most trifling ruin, or trace of former civilization." After bringing forward a mass of evidence in proof of the conclusion to which he had arrived from the result of this journey, he thus sums up his able investigation:—

"Naar man overveier alle disse Grunde, og tillige betænker, at de Gamles Coursforskrifter ere apocryphiske, at de, for det Meste ere optegnede efter

Of their remains Captain Graah has given highly interesting and minute descriptions, enabling us

mundtlig Fortælling, at de först ere samlede og komme for Lyset 100 Aar efterat Seiladsen paa Grönland var ophört, at de ere samlede af Walchendorff, der havde en forudfattet mening om Bygderens Beliggenket [en mening der forresten hos ham var saare naturlig, saasom han ikke kiendte Beliggenheden af Cap Farvel, eller maaskee drömte om, at Grönland havde nogen Vestkyst] at de forskiellige Afskrifter af disse Coursforskrifter lyde forskielligt efter de forskiellige Afskriverces Fortolknings maade og individuelle Meninger, at derimod GRIPLA og Björn Jonsens Chorographie bære umiskiendeligt Præg of Œgthed; saa mener jeg enhver upartisk maae antage, at Oesterbygden ikke kan have ligget paa Grönlands æstlige kyst."

"When we reflect upon all these points, and at the same time, consider that the sailing directions [Coursforskrifter] of the antients are apocryphal, that they for the most part, are taken down from oral relation,—that they were first collected and brought to light 100 years after the communication with Greenland had ceased,—that they have been put together by Walchendorff, who had a preconceived opinion about the situation of the Colony (an opinion which, moreover, was very natural for him, as he did not know the position of Cape Farewell, nor, perhaps, had ever dreamed of Greenland having any west coast at all)—that the various copyists of these sailing directions vary according to the mode of interpretation of the different copyists, and their individual opinions,—that on the other hand, the Chorography of Gripla and Björn Jonson bear the unequivocal stamp of genuineness,—I am of opinion that every impartial person will conclude that the Eastern settlement could not have been situated on the east coast of Greenland."

Undersögelse Reise til Oestkysten af Grönland efter kongelig Befalning udfört i Aarene 1828-31, af W. A. Graah, Capitain-Lieutenant i Söe-Etaten. Kiöbenhavn, 1832, pp. 187, 188.

Notwithstanding the clear and conclusive publication of Captain Graah, some doubts have still been expressed upon this mysterious subject [Ed. Cab. Lib. xxviii. p. 252] which appear to be founded chiefly upon Graah's description of the appearance of the natives whom he met, and whose features he found to differ from those of their countrymen on the western coast, and to present a greater resemblance to Europeans. But an insurmountable objection to the existence of a colony on the east coast of Greenland is presented by the impracticable nature of the country intervening between this coast and the west, and the impossibility of a mutual intercourse being maintained between two settlements separated by a chain of lofty mountains covered with perpetual snow, and obstructed by precipices and

from these and more recent examinations of several localities on the west coast of Greenland, to trace the vestiges of the old colonies from the most southern fjord at Cape Farewell, up to the neighbourhood of Holsteinborg.

KAKORTOK CHURCH.

The remains in the vicinity of Juliana Hope (Julianeshaab), supposed by Graah to be the original Eastern settlement, exceed in number and importance all others in Greenland. In this district are the remarkable ruins of Kakortok church, which furnish evidence of a degree of civilization, that could scarcely have been expected to exist at the distant period of its construction. This ruin is situated upon an arm of Igalikko fjord, about twelve English miles from Juliana Hope, and stands upon a piece of table land near the water, bounded on the other side by perpendicular rocks, beyond which snow-clad mountains rise 3 to 4000 feet above the level of the sea. It presents the remnant of a simple but tasteful style of architecture: the walls are formed of large and partly hewn stones, which were doubtless taken from the neighbouring rock, both being of similar quality, and each stone has been placed carefully at the side of and above

ravines. See Graah, p. 12. The Editors of "Polar Seas and Regions," have erroneously placed the principal localities of the Eystribygd [Eriksfjord, Garda, and Herjulfsness,] all N. E. of Cape Farewell, whereas their position as determined by Graah and Rafn is on the S. W. coast. Compare Plate II. and "Chart of Polar Seas." Ed. Cab. Lib. Vol. I.

the other; no traces of any connecting medium are visible on the external wall, but small pieces of a hard white material, apparently mortar, are seen, here and there, among the stones on the inside. The principal part of the church, which looks towards the south, and upon the water, has four rectangular window openings, and two door-ways, the eastern of which is nearly one foot and a half lower than the other, and probably served to admit the officials of the church, while the western was used by the congregation. In the northern front, only one window-opening is perceptible, the wall in which the corresponding apertures were placed, having fallen down. The principal entrance appears to have been at the western end, over which is a large window; and upon the same level at the eastern end is another very skilfully arched. Some small rectangular niches appear in the interior walls, which probably served or were intended to hold tablets, with biblical texts, or images of saints, carved in wood or bone.*

This remarkable building, which altogether exhibits as much skill as taste in the construction, is fifty-one feet in length by twenty-five feet in breadth; the northern and southern walls are over four feet thick, and the height varies from seven to thirteen feet, the thickness of the end walls is nearly five feet; the height of the eastern wall, which in the year 1777 was twenty-two feet, is now only eighteen feet three inches, the western, nearly sixteen feet. The

* Graah, ap. Nord. Tidsk. for Oldkynd. B. 1, p. 151, seq.

principal entrance is three feet and a half wide, six feet and a half high; above the latter lies a large stone twelve feet long, twenty-five inches broad, and seven to eight inches high. The small niches are twenty-three inches long, seventeen inches deep, and fourteen inches high; the vaulted window, on the outside, three feet nine inches high, and two feet one inch and a half broad: inside five feet four inches high, four feet four inches broad; the corresponding one in the western wall,—outside three feet one inch and a half high, and one foot three inches broad; and the four in the principal front, together with the one in the north wall,—outside two feet eleven inches high, and one foot four inches wide, inside four feet four inches high, and four feet two inches wide: round the whole building, at the distance of fifty or sixty feet, are traces of a stone fence or boundary, which, however, is now altogether in ruins.*

It is remarkable that no vestige of any artificial floor or flagging was found by Captain Graah on his examination of this ruin, nor did a long and careful examination of the ground within the walls lead to the discovery of any objects of interest. earth and stones of every shape and form lay intermingled without order, wherever the excavation was carried on, and neither monumental stones or inscriptions were brought to light. It has hence been concluded that Kakortok church was never finished. Some of the stones, such as that over the principal entrance, seem to have been expressly

* Graah, as first cited, at page 4 to 10.

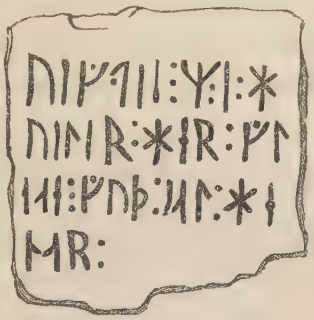
intended to receive inscriptions; but the circumstance of the church never having been completed would account for their present condition. On the whole, these ruins, compared with the other remains in the same district, shew that Kakortok church was one of the last, if not the very last building erected in Greenland by the Icelandic colonists.*

RUNIC STONE AT IGALIKKO.

A Greenlander named Christian, who lives in Igalikko, about nine Danish miles from the colony of Juliana Hope, and had adopted European habits, went to look for some stones to repair his house, amongst a heap of ruins, which lay closely piled together, and covered with turf and stones, at the end of the remains of a building, which was supposed to have been a church, and there met with a stone which was marked with traces of writing. Shortly after this he visited the Danish colony at Juliana Hope, and mentioned the circumstance to the Director, Mr. Mathiesen, who immediately concluded that it was a Runic stone. With true antiquarian zeal he instantly took measures to ascertain the fact, and having prevailed upon the discoverer to convey the stone by water to the colony, he transmitted it to Copenhagen by an opportunity which fortunately happened to present itself at the moment, prudently retaining a copy of the inscription. In the spring of 1830 this remarkable memorial reached Copenhagen, and was submitted to the

* Graah, p. 155.

examination of the leading Runologists, who found the following characters admitting of a clear Icelandic interpretation :—



which, in Roman letters, would be :—

VIGDÍS M. D. HVÍLIR HÈR:GLEDÈ GUD SÁL HENNAR.

The name of Vigdis occurs frequently in old Icelandic narratives, and is still used in Iceland; the initials M. D. are intended to shew whose daughter this particular Vigdis was, M. being the initial of the father. Now among the various Icelandic names beginning with M. those of Már, Markús, and Magnús are the most common; the initials mean therefore Márs dótter, Markús dótter, or Magnús dótter, and the inscription may be read :—

"Vigdis Márs dótter hvilir her: Gledà Gud sál hennar." or—

"Vigdis Mars daughter rests here: May God gladden her soul."

This remarkable monument, affording such striking evidence of Christian worship and religious faith, may be ascribed to the 11th or 12th century; the stone is thin and flat, and of the red sandstone

formation ; the part below the inscription has been broken off, leaving a length of two feet fifteen inches by fourteen inches, with a thickness of two inches ; from the top of the stone to the beginning of the inscription, it measures two feet, and the lower extremity was probably the same length.*

RUNIC STONE AT IKIGEIT.†

About two English miles north of Friederichsthal, on the other side of the neighbouring fjord, Lat. 60° N. where a number of antient ruins are still visible, the Rev. Mr. de Fries, Principal of the Mission of the United Brethren, who had established a settlement on the coast in 1733, found, in the year 1831, a monumental stone, over the entrance of a Greenlander's house, where it had long lain. He had it immediately conveyed to the Colony of Juliana Hope, from whence Mr. Mathiesen, the chief of the Danish settlement there, secured its removal to Copenhagen. This stone is flat, and of an oblong form, being three feet and a half in length, by two feet at the top, and one foot and a half at the bottom, where it has been broken off. The thickness is five inches at the upper and two inches at the lower end; it is of hard granite, but the upper surface appears to have been defaced by long exposure to rain and sleet. Above is a circular figure, and

* Nordisk Tidskrift for Oldkyndighed, B. 1. p. 221. Antiq. Amer. p. 344.

† Supposed by Graah to be the antient Herjulfsness. Undersögelse Reise, p. 189.

immediately below, a long cross bounded by an oval. Under the horizontal arm of the cross, and parallel with the perpendicular limb, is an Icelandic inscription in the old northern Latin letters, which were in use at the beginning of the middle ages. This inscription is contained in two lines, one being on each side of the perpendicular, or lower arm, and the letters are exactly similar to those that are met with in Northern inscriptions of the 12th century, being as follows:—

HER : HVILIR : HRO/
KOLGRIMS : S.

Above the oval boundary are traces of another, probably older inscription, the greater part of which is defaced, or broken off; on that which remains the word IDUS is visible. It is probable, therefore, that here the day of the month was given, according to the Roman calendar, which was in general use amongst the northern clergy, in the middle ages. After the letter O in the principal inscription, appears an oblique line, which could scarcely have belonged to any other letter than an A. and the inscription may therefore be read:—"Hèr Hvilir Hróaldr (or Hróar) Kolgrimsson"—"Here rests Hroar Kolgrimsson." The name of Hróaldr or Hróar, as well as that of Kolgrimr is genuine old northern, and both are often met with in the narratives of earlier times, although now, almost entirely gone out of use: the name of Kolgrimr appears to have been continued

amongst the Greenlanders of Norwegio-Icelandic descent down to the later years of the colony.*

These are but a few of the numerous evidences of the antient Icelandic colony which are still visible. Captain Graah enumerates no less than six or seven places where the traces of churches have been found on the western coast of Greenland,† and the labours of the Antiquarian Society of Copenhagen are every year bringing to light some new and interesting detail connected with the history of the early settlers.‡

The final fate of this colony is, however, still involved in mystery. After having existed a flourishing settlement for more than 400 years, during the whole of which period a communication appears to have been kept up with the several branches in the western hemisphere,—it vanishes altogether from the page of history; nor was it until the pious, ardent, and indefatigable Hans Egede, after years of patient and ineffectual endeavour, at length succeeded in obtaining permission from the Danish government to form a settlement on the coast, that Greenland, in the beginning of the 18th century, again became known to Europe.

The scanty notices of its history from the end of the period embraced by the Sagas, up to the time of Egede's pious mission shall now be briefly related;

* Nordisk Tidskr. f. Oldkyndig. B. 1. p. 221, seq. Antiq. Amer. p. 340-1.

† Undersögelse Reise, p. 187. See also Pingel ap. Nord. Tidsk. f. Oldkynd. p. 313, seq.

‡ See Grönland's Historiske Mindesmærker, passim.

but as the earlier accounts are derived from antient Icelandic manuscripts, a simple reference to which might not, perhaps, be satisfactory to the general reader, it becomes necessary to follow Professor Rafn,* and shew the nature of the documents on which these annalistic records are founded :—

1. *Annales Islandorum Regii*, being Annals of Icelandic History from the time of Julius Cæsar to the birth of Christ, and thence by another writer to the year 1328, where they terminate. From a passage in the title, which states that the record contains occurrences from the time of Cæsar down to the 5th year of the Emperor Frederic I. it is inferred that the writer of the first part lived in the year 1156, after which the annals were copied and brought down by another hand to 1307, to which period the copy may be referred: the remainder was then continued by a third compiler to 1328. (R.)

2. *Annales Vetustissimi.* From the birth of Christ to the year 1313, witten in the 14th century. (V.)

3. *Annales Skalholtini.* (Skalholts annál hinn forni) Antient Annals of the Bishopric of Skalholt in Iceland, written in the middle of the 14th century. These are supposed to have commenced with the birth of Christ, but the part previous to the year 140 is wanting, and they terminate with 1356.

4. *Lögmanns Annáll.* Annals of the Lagmen or Governors of Iceland. The first part is lost;

* Excerpta ex Annalibus Islandorum Antiq. Amer. p. 255.

the remainder extends from 272 to 1392, the interval from 460 to 656 being also deficient. These annals accord with the MS. called by Bishop Brynjulf Sveinson, who lived in the middle of the 17th century, "*Skalholt's annál hyna nya*," or "Revised Annals of Skalholt," which extend from A. D. 70 to 1430. These two series were united by Arnas Magnussen to form the codex, No. 427, 4to. so that the Lagmen's Annals, as far as they extend, may be considered the foundation of the series: to these also properly belongs the paper codex, No. 417, which extends from A. M. 3916 to A. D. 1427. (L.)

5. *Annales Reseniini*, so called in honour of the eminent Resenius, Councillor of State, and Professor of Icelandic Literature, by whom they were preserved. They embrace the period extending from 228 to 1295, and appear to have been autographs written at the termination of the period. (Res.)

6. *Annales Flateyensis*, so called from having been found in the Codex Flateyensis. They were written by the ecclesiastic Magnus Thorhallson, and include a period of time extending from the creation of the world to the year 1395. (F.)

7. *Annales Holenses*, obtained by Torfæus from the episcopal seat of Holum in Iceland. In 1689 he gave them to Arnas Magnussen, in whose collection they are now to be found, No. 412, in 4to.: they extend from 636 to 1394. (H.)

8. *Annales Grœnlandici*, compiled by Björn Johnson of Skardsoe, and inserted at the end of his

Annals of Greenland (Grœnland's annáll) under the title of: *Stuttligir ágrips annálar um Grœnland í vissu ártali*, or "Short Annals of Greenland for certain years."

From these various contemporary documents, which will be distinguished by the final letters or syllables appended above, the following chronological details have been obtained:—

1121. Erik, Bishop of Greenland, went to seek out* Vinland. R.F.
Bishop Erik sought out Vinland. Res.
Bishop Erik Upse sought Vinland. L.
Bishop Erik Upse went from Greenland to seek out Vinland. exscr. 417.
Erik, Bishop of Greenland, sought Vinland. H.
Erik, Bishop of Greenland, went to seek Vinland. G.

1285. A land is discovered west from Iceland. V.F.
New land is found - - - .† H.
Adalbrand and Thorvald, the sons of Helge, found the new land. R.
Adalbrand and Thorvald, Helge's sons, found new land west from Iceland. G.
The feather islands‡ are discovered. S.L.

1288. Rolf is sent by King Erik to seek out the new land, and called on people from Iceland to go with him. C.

* "Fór at leita." Erik is mentioned in Rimbegla, p. 320, as the first Bishop of Greenland, also in the Landnámábok, Lib. I. c. 13, as "Grœnlandinga biskup." Antiq. Amer. p. 258.

† "Fannst nýja land," the rest is wanting in the MS.

‡ Dúneyjar, probably Penguin and Bacaloa islands, N.E. coast of America.

1289. King Erik sends Rolf to Iceland to seek out the new land. F.

1290. Rolf travelled through Iceland, and called out men for a voyage to the new land.* F.

1295. Landa-Rolf died.† F.

1347. There came XIII. sea-ships to Iceland. The Eindrida was lost to the westward on Langaness; the men and the greater part of the goods were saved. The Bessalang went to pieces off Sida; of her crew were drowned Halldor Magri and Guthorm Stali, and in all XIX men; there was also much damage done to the cargo. There were besides VI ships driven back. There came also a ship from Greenland smaller in size than the small Icelandic craft; it came into the outer Streamfjord; it had lost an anchor; therein were XVII men, who had been to Markland, but on their return, were driven in here. In all were here for the winter XVIII sea-ships, besides the two that were lost in the summer. S.

* The notices of "Nýja land," and "Dúneyjar," would seem to refer to a re-discovery of some parts of the eastern coast of America, which had been previously visited by earlier voyagers. The original Icelandic appellation of Nýja land, or Nýja fundu land, would have naturally led to the modern English name of Newfoundland, given by Cabot, to whose knowledge the discovery would have come through the medium of the commercial intercourse between England and Iceland in the 15th century.

†The Lagmans Annals make mention of continued storms and pestilential disease, followed by famine, in 1287, (Antiq. Amer. p. 261), which may account for the imperfect records of this period. From the cognomen of *Landa* or Explorer, applied to Rolf, on this occasion, the expedition would appear to have taken place.

There came a ship from Greenland, which had sailed to Markland, and therein eighteen men. F.

Thus far the contemporary Annals of Iceland. We are next informed that during the episcopate of Bishop Alf, who lived in the year 1349, or according to others, 1379, the Western settlement of Greenland was attacked by the Skrælings or Esquimaux, when eighteen Greenlanders of Icelandic descent were killed, and two boys carried off prisoners. On this being made known in the Eastern settlement, Ivar Bere, or Bardson, who appears to have been bailiff or superintendent at the Bishop's residence, was dispatched to the assistance of the neighbouring colony, but found it deserted, and meeting with nothing but cattle, he had these conveyed to the ship, and returned: with this event closes the history of the Vestribygd.*

But of the Eastern settlement we have tidings down to the middle of the 15th century: trade was carried on between it and Denmark until towards the end of the 14th century, although the colony was not annually visited, as appears from the circumstance that when in 1388, Bishop Hendrick went to Greenland, he received orders to have the royal dues lodged in a specified place, as no ship had gone to the country that year. The last Bishop, according to Torfæus, was Andreas, or Endride Andreasson, who was appointed to the office in 1406, but whether he ever reached the country was

* Graah, p. 4, seq.

unknown until Professor Finn Magnusen, a few years since, discovered that three years subsequent to that period, namely in 1409, he filled the office at the episcopal seat of Gardar, and there prepared, or was a party to the contract of a marriage, from which the learned Runologist himself, as well as many other distinguished Icelanders owe their descent. After this period all communication between Greenland and the rest of the Danish territory, and consequently between Greenland and America, appears to have ceased, for Queen Margaret and King Erik forbade their subjects to trade to the country. The war which then raged in the north of Europe also prevented vessels from visiting the coast, and thus no knowledge of the colony could be obtained.* Meantime some further light has been thrown upon the fate of the settlers by the discovery in the Papal archives, of a brief from Nicholas V. to the Bishops of Skalholt and Holum, written in the year 1448, which runs as follows:—

"With reference to my beloved children, who are natives of and dwell in the great island of Greenland, which is said to lie on the extremest boundaries of the ocean, northwards of the kingdom of Norway, and in the district of Throndjem, have their pitiful complaints greatly moved my ear, and awakened our sympathy, seeing that the inhabitants, for almost six hundred years, have held the Christian faith, which, by the teaching of their first instructor, King Olaf, was established

* Graah, p. 5.

amongst them, firm and immoveable under the Roman See, and the Apostolic forms; and seeing that, in after years, from the constant and ardent zeal of the inhabitants of the said island, many sacred buildings, and a handsome cathedral, have been erected in this island, in which the service of God was diligently performed, until heathen foreigners from the neighbouring coast, thirty years since, came with a fleet against them, and fell with fury upon all the people who dwelt there, and laid waste the land itself and the holy buildings with fire and sword, without leaving upon the island Greenland, other than the few people who are said to lie far off, and which they, by reason of high mountains, could not reach, and took off the much to be commiserated inhabitants of both sexes, particularly those whom they looked upon as convenient and strong enough for the constant burden of slavery, and took home with them those against whom they could best direct their barbarity. But now since the same complaint further saith that many, in the course of time, have come back from said captivity, and after having, here and there, rebuilt the devastated places, now wish to have the worship of their God again established, and set upon the former footing; and since they, in consequence of the before named pressing calamity, wanting the necessary means themselves, have hitherto not had the power to support their priesthood and superiors, therefore, during all that period of thirty years, have been in want of the

consolations of the Bishops and the services of the Priests, except when some one through desire of the service of God, has been willing to undertake tedious and toilsome journeys to the people whom the fury of the barbarians has spared,—Seeing that we have a complete knowledge of all these things, so do we now charge and direct ye brethren, who, we are informed, are the nearest Bishops to the said island, that ye, after previously conferring with the chief Bishop of the Diocese, if the distance of the place allows of it, to nominate and send them a fit and proper man as Bishop."*

Captain Graah conjectures that the fleet thus alluded to in the Papal brief, came from England, which country having, about that time, suffered a great decrease in her population by the pestilential disease known by the name of the "black death," sought to repair the injury by seizing the inhabitants of those northern lands that were preserved from this plague. Many complaints, he says, were made upon this subject by Margaret of Denmark and her successors, until, in 1433, a treaty was made between England and Denmark, containing the conditions that "whatever people have been carried from Iceland, Finmark, Helgeland, and other places, His Majesty of England shall provide that wherever they are found in his dominions, they shall go back, and shall receive payment for their services, and so order that they come free to their

* Extract from Vatican Archives in Paul Egedes Efterretninger, p. 87, seq.

homes again ; and it shall be made known over all England within a year and a day after the date of these letters, of the said captives release."* This opinion is strengthened by the circumstance of Pope Eugenius IV. having in this same year (1433) nominated one Bartholomæus to the Bishopric of Greenland.†

But the fate as well of those who escaped the fury of the hostile invaders, as of those who afterwards returned from captivity, is still involved in mystery. Probably they were attacked and exterminated by the Esquimaux like their countrymen of the Western settlement, or being so reduced in numbers by the above mentioned aggressions, and unprovided with the Ministers of their religion, became heathens, and amalgamated with the natives : or they might have

* Undersögelse, Reise, p. 7. Capt. Graah gives no authority for this extract ; and I have been unable to find any reference to the alleged treaty, either in the Statutes, Chronicles, or State Papers for the reign of Henry VI., to which period the extract refers : Grafton's Chronicle, however, as well as the Statutes, so far favour the statement as to record a destructive plague in and in the neighbourhood of London, in the year 1405, and a reparative treaty with Denmark in 1429, which contain the following passages :—

"1405—7. This summer the plague of pestilence reigned so sore in the Citie of London, and in the countrie round about the Citie, that the King durst not repayre thither." Graft. Chron. "It is ordeyned that none of his liege people nor subiectes of his realme of England, by audacitie of theyr foly, presume to enter the realmes, landes, domynyons, streytes, territories, jurisdictions, and places of the sayd King of Denmarke, against the ordynons, prohybycyon, and interdictyon of the same his uncle above remembered, and in contempt of the same, upon paine of forfayture of all theyr movable goodes and imprysonment of theyr person at the Kynge's will." Stat. 8th Henry VI. (1429.)

† Vat. Arch. ap. P. Egede, p. 86. According to Crantz, the suffragan Bishop of Roeskilde subscribed himself Bishop of Greenland in 1533. See Hist. of Greenland, Vol. I. p. 253.

voluntarily left the country, on finding that all trade with it was discontinued, for being dependent upon foreign ships for their supplies, they were necessarily reduced to great privations on this intercourse being arrested. The following, however, is the story current in the country itself:—

"Many winters after the old Northmen had been cleared from the land and destroyed by the Greenlanders, there still lived some on the northern arm of Igalikofjord, among whom was a large old man, of more than ordinary strength, whose name was Igaliko, after whom the fjord was named by the Greenlanders. He was as chief over all the other Northmen at the fjord, and had sons, one of whom was yet in his childhood. The Greenlanders had many times sought to destroy him and his family, but had always returned in disgrace from the attempt, and some of them on such occasions had fallen. But having determined to extirpate the Northmen from their land, as they called it, they planned new means of effecting their design, which were attended with success:—During the summer, the wind generally blows up the fjords, consequently into Igaliko fjord, and on this wind was their chief dependance. Several of the Greenlanders got into one of the boats usually worked by women in that country, and covering themselves in white skins, lay down in the bottom of the boat, so that none of them were visible. They took with them arms, lances and harpoons, dry moss, and other convenient materials for ignition, and thus provided, allowed

the boat to be driven by the wind up the fjord. These white boats and men, were looked upon by the Northmen as blocks of ice, and excited no alarm. Towards midnight the Greenlanders leaving the boat, crept to the dwellings of the Northmen, and fired the houses while the inmates slept, then standing at the outside ready to meet the unfortunate settlers, as they attempted to escape, killed them on the spot. All fell, except the aged warrior Igaliko and his younger son, for he seeing that his comrades were slain, took up his child, and fled to the mountains. The Greenlanders followed; but old as the chieftain was, and rendered still less able to cope with his pursuers by the burden of his child, he succeeded in eluding their grasp, and effected his escape. What afterwards became of him is unknown, as neither he nor his son was ever seen or heard of more."*

Years passed without Greenland being thought of by the Danish government, which became too much occupied with domestic dissensions and destructive wars, to regard the interests of so distant and unprofitable a settlement; at length in the reign of Christian II. (1523) Erik Walchendorff, Archbishop of Throndhjem, probably excited by the recent discoveries in the Western hemisphere, conceived the project of revisiting the neglected colony, and having collected all the old accounts and traditions relating to the land, constructed a chart for

* Arctander, as quoted by Graah in Nordisk. Tidskr. for Oldkyndig, B. 1. p. 155.

the guidance of mariners, and proposed to the Government a rediscovery of the Greenland coast, and a resumption of the trade; he even offered to defray the cost of the expedition from his private means, on being secured the profits of the trade for a period of ten years. But the offer was rejected, and Walchendorff incurring the enmity of the powerful Sigbret, fell into disgrace, and died at Rome.

Upon Walchendorff's compilations are principally founded the opinions of those who have not only placed the Eastern but Western settlement on the east coast of Greenland; an opinion general in his time; and very natural, for Davis' Straits had not then been discovered, and the configuration of the coast was unknown: at least no more known than that it was the nearest land west of Iceland, and that Erik the Red had steered westwards when he discovered the country.*

Christian III. (1559) removed the prohibition established by Queen Margaret against trading to Greenland, and sent out ships to explore the country, but without success; several attempts were made in the succeeding reigns down to that of Frederick III. (1670) with similar results: ice rendered the east coast altogether inaccessible, and the ferocity of the inhabitants on the western side, where some of the explorers landed, and adopted the most unlikely means to conciliate a suspicious and barbarous people, precluded all possibility of friendly intercourse on that boundary, and now

* Graah, p. 8.

again, for a series of years, Greenland was like the region of romance.

Then stood forth Hans Egede, Pastor of Vaag, in the northern district of Norway, and with him commences a new era in the annals of Greenland. This remarkable man was at once the re-discoverer of the land, and the Apostle of Christianity to its inhabitants. The dream of a deserted Christian colony on those distant shores, cut off by a stormy ocean, and an icy barrier, from all communication with their fellow countrymen in the parent state, and relapsed, perhaps, into Paganism from the want of teachers and ministers of religion, passed in vivid colouring before his mind, not long after he had taken possession of his benefice in 1708; and soon completely engrossed his thoughts, and engaged all his sympathies. In 1710, he drew up a memorial to the Danish Government on the subject, and addressed letters to the Bishops of Trondhjem and Bergen, soliciting their support in aid of his proposition, that steps should be taken to inquire into and relieve the spiritual and temporal wants of the supposed neglected colony. The Bishops promised fair, but put forward, in a strong light, the various dangers and difficulties with which such an expedition must necessarily be attended: meantime the novel proposition became public and met with the greatest outcry and derision. Egede's more intimate friends, and relatives in particular, raised the strongest objections to the plan, and instigated his wife and family to turn him from his purpose; this

gave rise to much domestic pain, and the tears and remonstrances of a beloved partner, acting upon an affectionate heart, shook his resolution to such an extent that he made a powerful effort to sacrifice his philanthropic project to her peace of mind. But the 37th verse of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew,* he says, roused him to a sense of duty; his mental agitation was renewed, and he became a stranger to repose either by day or by night. Meantime a change had come over the feelings of his wife, and she suddenly expressed her readiness to accede to his wishes. Now all difficulties appeared to vanish; he looked forward with sanguine confidence to the success of his benevolent plan, and joyfully renewed his petitions and solicitations to the Bishops and superior authorities. But, now he was put off on the plea of deferring the matter to more peaceable times, and again the whole scheme was characterized as wild and visionary. This led him in 1715, to draw up a vindication of his conduct, which was quite unanswerable, but still every effort was made to turn him from his purpose: the rigour of the climate,—the dangers of the voyage and abode in a barbarous country,—the madness of giving up a certainty for an uncertainty,—every argument, in short, that could by ingenuity be brought to bear upon the imprudence of the expedition was carefully put before him; nor were there wanting those who (inconsistent as it might

* "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," &c.

be) cast imputations of vain and worldly motives upon his proposed self-expatriation in so disinterested a cause.

Wearied by vain promises and calumnious reports, Egede at length resolved upon pleading his own cause in person before the King (Frederick IV.); and throwing up his benefice in 1718, he tore himself from a congregation by whom he was adored, and repaired to Bergen. Here he was looked upon as a fanatic, but heedless of the ridicule that was sought to be thrown upon his benevolent design, he proceeded to Copenhagen, presented his memorial to the College of Missions, and received the gratifying intelligence that the King would take the subject into his gracious consideration.

The result was that, in November, 1719, a Royal Ordinance was addressed to the magistrates of Bergen, directing them to enquire into and report upon the practicability and advantages of forming a settlement on the coast of Greenland; but no encouragement was derived from this enquiry, and Egede again beheld himself the object of scorn and mockery: at length by individual application he succeeded in persuading some merchants to enter into a subscription in aid of the proposed expedition; and one commercial gentleman of Hamburg undertook to furnish a large proportion of the required capital; but this individual soon after withdrew from his engagement, and Egede, baffled and disappointed in the completion of those plans which appeared to be on the eve of execution, had also to

bear the weight of the increased slander and evil rumours, which his failure called forth. Thus passed another year; but this ardent minister of religion was not disheartened: he continued his petitions and solicitations as well to the Government as to private individuals, and at length succeeded in prevailing upon a certain number of the Bergen merchants to come forward with a subscription of about 40*l.* each: to this he added the whole of his own little property, about 60*l.* more, making altogether the sum of 10,000 dollars, or 2,000*l.* sterling, a capital ill proportioned to the extent of the undertaking; nevertheless a ship was bought; two more were also freighted for the voyage, the one for the whale fishery, and the other to bring back tidings of the expedition, and in the ensuing spring Egede had the unspeakable gratification of seeing his perseverance rewarded by the announcement that the King of Denmark approved of the undertaking, and appointed him chief of the colony, and missionary to Greenland, with a salary of 60*l.* a year, besides 40*l.* for his equipment.*

Thus after ten years of protracted, discouraging endeavour, did this admirable minister of a philanthropic faith, unawed by the terrors of a frozen zone and a barbarous people,—of physical privations, and an isolated unfriended position, far from the social comforts of a tranquil home,—go forth to spread the blessings of the Gospel in a heathen land!

* Omstændelig og udförlig Relation angaande Den Grönlandske Missions Begyndelse og Fortsættelse, &c. of Hans Egede, Kiöbenhavn, 1738.

Egede embarked at Bergen on the 2nd of May, 1721, taking with him his wife and four children, the eldest of whom was only twelve years of age, and after a long and perilous voyage of eight weeks, reached an island at the entrance of Baal's river, in lat. 64° on the western coast of Greenland, and called the place Good Hope. The settlers were at first well received, but their preparations for remaining were viewed by the natives with distrust and alarm, and various means were employed to deter them from the formation of a colony: the Angekkoks or wizards, in particular, seeing their influence endangered by the propagation of an exalted doctrine, which prostrated the pretensions of human power, used various spells and incantations to expel the colonists, and prevent the progress of their religious labours; but the prudent, mild, and conciliating measures and demeanour of Egede enabled him, after a time, to overcome these prejudices, set on foot a commercial intercourse, and eventually to make considerable progress in the good work which he had so zealously undertaken. The physical fatigues and privations, however, to which the settlers were obliged to submit, were of a most harassing and trying character; their chief dependence for food was upon ships from home, and the non-arrival or delay of these vessels often placed them on the verge of famine, and naturally created a mutinous and discontented spirit among those of his associates who were less prepared to withstand these trials than the pious Missionary and his

family. "For almost one entire year," writes Paul Egede, "rye meal porridge was our only food." "This year (1726) we were again in great want, owing to the non-arrival of the ships; our food was generally the flesh of the seal, which gives no nourishment, so that our men could not row for an hour without the oars falling from their hands."* On all these occasions his exemplary parent exhibited a model of Christian faith and fortitude, and regardless of his own necessities, was alone distressed by the sufferings of those around him. "In this need," writes the son, "my dear father, who cared for us all, undertook a difficult journey to the south bay, about fifty miles (200 English miles) north of the colony, to see if he could there meet with some Dutch vessels, from which he might be able to procure supplies, and disencumber himself of nine of the men. After an absence of fourteen days, he returned, having found twelve ships in the bay. They took the men, but could give little help to the twenty-one who remained. Eight men were now obliged to live on the allowance of one. Groats for seal soup were weighed out in a pair of silver scales. . . . . These great privations of ours sunk deep in my father's heart. As concerned himself, he had, like St. Paul, learned to be equally satisfied as well with plenty as with want; but his wife and children lay nearest to his heart, and the murmurs and impatience of the people made this still more bitter."†

* Efterretninger om Grönland af Paul Egede, Kiöbenhavn, 1788. p. 31.

† Ibid. p. 32.

In the midst of the trying privations here detailed, a ship providentially arrived from Copenhagen, "and now all the bread that was intended for the year's consumption, was devoured at breakfast."* On the accession of Christian VI. of Denmark in 1730, that monarch decided upon giving up the Greenland trade and mission; and in the following year, sent out two ships, with orders to bring back all the settlers except the Minister and his family, and any of the sailors whom he might be able to persuade to stay with him: it was also distinctly made known that no prospect could be held out of any further aid from Denmark.

But although thus threatened with abandonment by both his country and his King, the faithful Egede would not desert his Christian converts, and contrary to the advice and earnest expostulations of all his friends, he resolved to continue with his family, in the land of his labours, and only begged as many men as were necessary for his absolute wants, together with provisions for one year. With great difficulty he prevailed upon eight men to share his fate; and putting his trust in that Providence which had safely brought him through so many trials, he addressed a feeling and energetic letter to the King, setting forth the vain efforts of all the exertions he had made, if the colony were now abandoned, and appealing to all the nobler feelings of a monarch and a fellow man.

For one year the settlers waited in anxious un-

* Efterretninger om Grönland af Paul Egede, Kiöbenhavn, 1788, p 33, seq.

certainty, but Christian VI. of Denmark, was a wise, a patriotic and an enlightened prince, loved by his subjects, and respected by his contemporaries, and the powerful appeal of the Christian minister met with a favourable reception at the foot of the throne. The termination of the anxious period brought with it the joyful announcement of the king's intention to perpetuate the mission, and to allocate 2000 dollars annually to its support.*

For fifteen long years did this exemplary man continue to labour in the execution of a duty which he had conscientiously imposed upon himself, and when, at the end of this period, his mental sufferings, and shattered health, increased by a domestic calamity, which deprived him of a consolation and support that had cheered his drooping spirits under the severest trials,† obliged him to resign the

* Efterretninger, &c. p. 43.

† This severe affliction is thus mentioned in the simple and expressive language of his published Journal:—21st December, 1724. "It pleased the all-wise and good God, in addition to all my other misfortunes and difficulties in Greenland, to afflict me by taking my dearest wife. Were it not for the consoling hope of a joyful re-union in God's heavenly kingdom, I could scarcely be reconciled to the loss of so pious and virtuous a partner. I will not say how faithful and dear she was to me, or how good and kind a mother to her children, but only how willing and affectionate she was to submit to my wish when I had formed the resolution in God, to leave friends and fatherland, and betake myself to Greenland, to teach Christianity to the ignorant inhabitants. For, although kinsfolk and friends pressed her hard, and industriously represented to her, that for her own, and my sake, and that of our little children, she ought to oppose and prevent me from engaging in such a rash and foolish undertaking, yet out of love to God and me, she rather let herself be persuaded to approve of my design, and like a true Sarah, went with her Abraham from her kinsfolk and her father's house, to a strange, nay, to a barbarous and heathen land. How patiently and peaceably she, since that time, has withstood with me, all the labour

charge of the mission into the hands of his son, it smote his heart to leave his cherished converts; and the little that he had accomplished, and the necessity for his departure, embittered his thoughts, and weighed upon his mind up to the moment of his last farewell.*

Virtuous Egede! If patience and perseverance in a holy cause;—if an ardent and untiring zeal in the propagation of truth;—if an exalted piety;

and opposition which the good God has suffered to oppress us, is known to many; yea, often comforted and cheered my mind, when it was faint and desponding from so many difficulties."—Omstændelig og udförlig Relation, &c.

* "1736, July 29, Sunday. I preached my farewell sermon from Esa. 49, v. 4, thereto moved by the bad result of my in God well meant projects, which have made me so completely cast down, and hopeless of a better success under the nature of the present existing circumstances; yet hoping, at my safe return, to be able to contribute more to forward the design, than if I had remained in Greenland. That this, and nothing else, was my aim is known to the Almighty God, and not to seek any ease, or reward for past trouble and labour, which cannot help me; for as I have not come to Greenland for temporal gain or advantage, so do I not return for temporal gain, but for God's honour alone; and the enlightenment of these poor ignorant people, has and shall be my only object, nay, the innermost wish of my heart until my death. I must confess that the poor Greenlanders were not well pleased at my going away, wherefore also, it went as near, and nearer to my heart to leave them; but as I saw that my remaining could little help them, after I was so much weakened both in mental and bodily power, that I could hold out no longer, I thought it my duty, at the moment I was about to leave, to provide, as far as lay in my power, for their eternal welfare, and make all necessary arrangements thereto; giving them over, for the rest, to God's unceasing mercy and grace, and therewith wish that he will awaken righteous means for their salvation, enlighten their darkness, and drive from their minds the clouds of ignorance, and by the power of his grace, finally endow them with knowledge, and a desire for truth. Amen." Ibid. p. 404. On his return to Copenhagen, Egede was placed at the head of the Committee for directing the affairs of the Greenland Mission, and employed the remainder of his days in teaching the Greenland language to young missionaries intended for that colony: he died in the island of Falster, A.D. 1758.

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PART III.

MINOR NARRATIVES,

CONTAINING

NOTICES OF THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE IRISH IN ICELAND

AND THE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

PART III.

MINOR NARRATIVES.

The following selections are made from that division of the Antiquitates Americanæ, entitled "Breviores Relationes," being extracts, and short narratives taken from various Icelandic manuscripts now extant in the Royal and University Libraries of Copenhagen. They will be found to contain some interesting particulars of the traces of Irish settlers found in Iceland previous to the occupation of that island by the Norwegians in the 9th century, as well as authentic accounts of voyages performed by the Northmen in the years 999, and 1029 to that part of the Western hemisphere known to them under the name of White Man's Land, or Great Ireland [Huitramanna land eder Irland it Mikla].

MINOR NARRATIVES.

A. FROM THE HISTORY OF KING OLAF TRYGGVASON.

ACCORDING TO THE SECOND VELLUM CODEX, No. 61. Fol.

Supposed to have been copied at the end of the 14*th or beginning of the* 15*th Century. Antiq. Amer. p.* 202.

THUS says the holy priest Bede, in the chronicles which he wrote concerning the regions of the earth :* that the island which is called Thule in the books, lies so far in the north part of the world, that there came no day in the winter, when the night is longest, and no night in summer, when the day is longest. Therefore think learned men that it is Iceland which is called Thule,† for there are many places in that land, where the sun sets not at night, when the day is longest, and in the

* De natura rerum et ratione temporum, Cap. 31, Colon. 1537. Fol.

† The locality of Thule is still a vexata questio with Antiquaries, the south coast of Norway, and north and north-west coast of Scotland having been each assigned for its position, as well as Iceland. Bede speaks of Thule according to the relation of Pytheas of Marseilles, Solinus, and Pliny, but makes it only six days' sail from Britain, which ill accords with the then state of navigation and nautical knowledge. Saxo would seem to refer Thule to the district of Tellemark on the south coast of Norway ; for in enumerating the warriors at the battle of Braavalle, he speaks of those from *Thyle*, which name is still to be found in that district : again, the particulars given of Thule by the Irish monk Dicuil, who wrote in the year 825, identify it with Iceland, and it seems probable that different parts of the North received the name, which, in the Icelandic language, signifies, end—extreme boundary (tili) according as discovery was extended. Thule has also been derived from the Irish word *thuat*, which signifies North. See O'Brien's Irish-English Dictionary in voce Tuat. Island's Opdagelse, &c. af N. M. Petersen, N. T. O. B. I.

same manner, where the sun cannot be seen by day, when the night is longest. But the holy priest Bede died DCCXXXV years after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, more than a hundred and twenty years before Iceland was inhabited by the Northmen. But before Iceland was colonized from Norway, men had been there whom the Northmen called Papas.* They were Christians; for after them were found Irish books, bells, and croziers,† and many other things, from whence it could be seen that they were Christian men, and had come from the west over the sea:‡ English books§ also shew that, in that time, there was intercourse between the two countries.

* Papa. The clerical order were called Papas by some Latin writers. See Du Fresnes Glossary ad script. mediæ et infimæ Latinitatis, and thus the Northmen may have adopted the word from southern nations, "timidus prægustes pocula Papas," Juv. Sat. iv. Du Fresnes shews also that the term was applied to Pædagogus.

† Bækr irskar, bjöllur ok baglar.

‡ Til vestan um haf. Ireland lying to the west of Norway, from whence the Icelanders had emigrated, was generally spoken of by them with reference to their fatherland, and for the same reason they called the Irish "westmen." According to a learned enquirer into the origin of the Irish, the literal meaning of the word Ireland is *Westland*, the celtic syllable *iar* or *er* meaning the *west*. This, however, is disputed by O'Brien, who maintains that the original interpretation of *iar* is "after," or "behind," and considers Eirin to be compounded of *i* and *erin*, the genitive of *ere*, iron, signifying the island of iron or mines, for which Ireland had formerly been famed, and hence ranked by antient writers among the Cassiterides. See Wood's Inquiry, concerning the primitive inhabitants of Ireland, p. 1.; O'Brien's Irish Dict. in voce Eirin.

§ The strongest testimony on this point is given by Dicuil, in a work entitled De mensura orbis terræ, wherein he shews that Iceland had been visited by Irish ecclesiastics in 795, and the Farœ islands in 725. See infra, and Antiq. Amer. p. 204, note *a*.

B. FROM THE SCHEDÆ OF ARI FRODE,

No. 54, Fol.

At that time was Iceland covered with woods, between the mountains and the shore. Then were here Christian people, whom the Northmen called Papas, but they went afterwards away, because they would not be here amongst heathens; and left after them Irish books, and bells, and croziers, from which could be seen that they were Irishmen.* But then began people to travel much here out from Norway, until King Harold forbade it, because it appeared to him that the land had begun to be thinned of inhabitants.

* Menn irscir.

C. FROM THE PROLOGUE TO THE LANDNÁMABÓK,

No. 53, Fol.

But before Iceland was colonized by the Northmen, the men were there whom the Northmen called Papas; they were Christians, and people think that they came from the west over the sea, for there was found after them Irish books, and bells, and croziers, and many more things from which it could be seen that they were Westmen; such were found eastwards in Papey, and Papýli: it is also mentioned in English books that in that time, was intercourse between the countries.

The particulars given of Thule by the Irish monk Dicuil, who wrote in the year 825, offer a remarkable confirmation of the Icelandic manuscripts respecting the residence of the Irish ecclesiastics in that region, which, in his work, is evidently identified with Iceland. He speaks of Thule as an uninhabited island, which, however, in his lifetime, about the year 795, had been visited by some monks, *with whom he himself had spoken*, and who had once dwelt upon the island from the first of February to the first of August. They denied the exaggerated statements that had been made by antient writers respecting the perpetual ice, continued day from the vernal to the autumnal equinox, and corresponding interval of night, but stated that a day's journey further northward, the sea was really frozen, and

that with respect to the length of the days and nights, at, and a few days before and after the summer solstice, the sun sank so little below the horizon during the night, that one could pursue their ordinary occupations as well as by day light. The author further describes several islands lying in the north part of the British ocean, and which, with a fair wind, might be reached from the north of Britain in two days and a night; and states that here *nearly a hundred years before*, namely A. D. 725, hermits from Ireland had taken up their abode, but, disturbed by the roving Northmen, had since departed, leaving the place uninhabited.* These islands are further described as having

* For the satisfaction of those readers whose national feelings may perhaps lead them to take more than ordinary interest in this well authenticated record of the early migration of the Irish to these remote islands, in the Northern sea, the original passage from *Dicuil* has been transcribed :—

" *Trigesimus* nunc *annus* est a quo *nuntiaveruni mihi* clerici, qui a kl. (kalendis) febrvarii usque kl. (kalendis) augusti in illa insula (Thule) manserant quod, non solum in æstivo solstitii, sed in diebus circa illud, in vespertina hora, occidens sol abscondit se quasi trans parvulum tumulum : ita ut, nihil tenebrarum in minimo spatio ipso fiat ; sed quicquid homo operari voluerit, vel pediculosus de camisia abstrahere tanquam in præsentia solis potest : et, si in altitudine montium ejus fuissent, forsitan nunquam sol absconderetur ab illis. In medio illius minimi temporis, medium noctis fit in medio orbis terræ ; et idcirco mentientes falluntur qui circum eam concretum fere mare scripserunt, et qui a vernali æquinoctio usque ad autumnale continum diem sine nocte, atque ab autumnali, versa vice, usque ad vernale æquinoctium assiduam quidem noctem, dum illi navigantes in naturali tempore magni frigoris eam intrabant, ac manentes in ipsa dies noctesque semper, præter solstitii tempus, alternatim habebant : sed navigatione unius diei ex illa ad boream congelatum mare invenerunt."

" Sunt aliæ insulæ multæ in septentrionali Brittaniæ oceano, quæ a septentrionalibus Brittanniæ insulis duorum dierum ac noctium recte navigatione, plenis velis, assiduo feliciter vento adire queunt. Aliquis prbt. (presbyter) religiosus mihi retulit quod, in duobus æstivis diebus et una intercedente nocte, navigans in duorum navicula transtrorum in unam illarum introivit. Illæ insulæ sunt aliæ parvulæ, fere cunctæ simul angustis dis antes fretis, in quibus *in centum ferme annis, heremitæ ex nostræ Scotiæ navigantes habitaverunt.* Sed, sicut a principio mundi desertæ semper

upon them a great number of sheep, which circumstance leads to the conclusion that they were the Farœ islands, the name of which is known to be derived from the original Icelandic term *Fareyjar* or sheep islands.

fuerunt, ita nunc, causa latronum Normannorum, vacuæ anachoritis, plenæ innumerabilibus ovibus, ac diversis generibus multis nimis marinarum avium. Nanquam eos insulas in libris auctorum memoratas invenimus."—Dicuili Liber de mensura orbis Terræ ex duobus codd. MSS. Bibliothecæ Imperialis, nunc primum in lucem editus a Car. Athen. Walckenaer. Parisiis M.DCCCVII.

ARI MARSON'S SOJOURN IN GREAT IRELAND,

A. D. 982.

From the Landnámabók, No. 107, *Fol. collated with accounts of the same transactions in Hauksbók, No.* 105, *Fol. Melabók, No.* 106 *and* 112, *Fol. and other MSS. in the Arne-Magnæan collection.*

Ulf the squinter, son of Högna the white, took all Reykjanes, between Thorkafjord and Hafrafell; he married Björg, daughter to Eyvind the Eastman, sister to Helge the lean; their son was Atli the red, who married Thorbjörg, sister to Steinólf the humble; their son was Mar of Hólum, who married Thorkatla, daughter of Hergil Neprass; their son was Ari;* he was driven by a tempest to White Man's Land, which some call Great Ireland;† it lies to the west in the sea, near to Vinland the Good, and VI days' sailing west from Ireland.‡ From thence could Ari not

* Ari Marson is mentioned in the Kristni Saga, C. 1, p. 6, amongst the principal chiefs in Iceland in the year 981, at which time Bishop Fridrick and Thorvald Kodranson came there to promulgate Christianity. He, and his kinsmen are highly lauded in several Icelandic historical works [Sögu-Þædtir Islandiga, Holum, 1756, 4, p. 105.—Fóstbrædra Saga, C. 1, p. 6.] His father Mar, and mother Katla figure in an antient poem, which is still preserved among the common traditions of the Icelanders, under the name of Kötludraumr or Katla's dream, and may be seen in the Arnæ-Magnæan collection, No. 154, 8vo. Antiq. Amer. p. 210, note *a*.

† "Til Hvitramannalands, Þat kalla sumir Irland ed mikla." Antiq. Amer. p. 211.

‡ "VI dægra sigling vestr frá Irlandi." Professor Rafn is of opinion that the figures VI, have arisen through mistake or carelessness of the transcriber of the original manuscript which is now lost, and were erroneously inserted instead of XX, XI, or perhaps XV, which would better correspond with the distance; this mistake might have easily arisen from a blot or defect in that part of the original MSS. Antiq. Amer. p 447.

get away, and was there baptized. This story first told Rafn the Limerick merchant,* who had long

* Hlymreksfari, a surname evidently given here to Rafn, in consequence of his trading to Limerick, with which as well as the other principal Irish sea-ports, the Northmen, called by the Irish, *Danes*, were accustomed to hold frequent communication from the end of the 8th century. Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick are called in the Icelandic, or old northern tongue, Dýflin, Vædrafjördr, and Hlimrek, which has probably led Cambrensis and others to attribute the foundation of these cities to the Northmen, Amelanus, Sitaracus, and Ivarus, or Anlaf, Sitric, and Ivar, in the year 864, when they made a hostile expedition to the country, and settled in these three towns respectively; but O'Halloran shews that Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick were cities of note long before that period, and that the trade of Dublin, in particular, was so great at the close of the 2nd century, that a bloody war broke out between the Monarch Con, and the King of Munster, to determine to whom the duties upon exports and imports should belong. Hist. Ireland, Vol. III. p. 178. Moore, however, gives Sitric the credit of founding Waterford. [II. p. 37.] although its original Irish name of *Port Lairge*, would seem to imply a place of some commercial importance before the adoption of its northern title, from which the name of Waterford is evidently derived. [Vædrafjord, the fordable frith.] Limerick, O'Halloran tells us, was so noted for its commerce from the earliest times, that it is never mentioned by antient Irish writers without the epithet *Long*, a ship, and we find Ceallachan Caisil, King of Munster, calling it Luimneach na Luingas, or Limerick of the ships. (Hist. Ir. I. p. 159, and III. p. 178.) According to Archbishop Usher, the first invasion of the Danes or Northmen, took place about the year 797, when the Annals of Ulster notice a descent on the isle of Rechrin or Raghlin, north of the county Antrim, and their incursions continued, with little intermission, until their final defeat by Brien Boirumhe or Boru, in the celebrated battle of Clontarff, April 23, 1014. The intervals of peace were naturally applied to commercial intercourse between the two nations, and the Northmen became established not only at the principal sea-ports, but in the interior of the country. Hence we find Irish names of persons in Iceland, and names of places, formed of Northern elements in Ireland; the Icelandic Niel or Njáll is evidently the Irish Neil; Kjallach, Ceallach; Kjaran, Kieran; Bjarni, Barny, &c. Names of places are of a mixed origin: to the Irish Laighean, Munhain, Ulladh, the Northmen added their *stadr* (place), which afterwards become *ster*, and thus arose Leinster, Munster, Ulster, &c. See De Ældste, toge fra Norden til Irland of N. M. Petersen, ap. Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed, 1836, p. 2-3. The general name of Danes could hardly have arisen from the invaders being

lived at Limerick in Ireland.* Thus said [also] Thorkell Gellerson,† that Icelanders had stated, who had heard Thorfinn Jarl of the Orkneys‡ relate, that Ari was recognised in White Man's Land, and could not get away from thence, but was there much respected. Ari married Thorgerd daughter to Alf of Dölum, whose sons were Thorgils, Gud-

considered Danish, as they were a mixed race of Danes, Norwegians Swedes, Saxons, Frisians, and other Gothic tribes from the Cimbric peninsula and shores of the Baltic, and were distinguished by the Irish according to the colour of their hair or complexion, as *Fionne Gail*, the white strangers, and *Dubh Gail*, the black strangers (hence probably Fingal and Donegal); the term Dane, which was sometimes applied, is, therefore, more likely to have been expressive of the character than the country of the invaders, and to be derived from the Irish words *Dana*, bold, impetuous, and *Fear*, man: hence *Dan-ou*, the impetuous river, as the Danube is called in antient Celtic. See O'Halloran, V. III. p. 149, and O'Brien's Irish Dict. in voce Dana.

* The pedigree of Rafn the Limerick merchant or Oddson, is given in the Landnámabók, II. 21, p. 98, from which it appears that he was descended from Duke Rolf of Norway, and on the maternal side, from Steinóf the humble, being thus connected as well with Ari Marson as Leif Erikson [See Genealog. Tab. No. 1, App.] and lived about the middle or beginning of the 11th century. In the Sturlunga Saga, I. c. 3, he is named amongst the ancestors of Skard-Snorri, from whom the most distinguished Icelanders trace their descent, and it is probable was the same individual known sometimes by the name of Rafn the Red [Rafn hinn raudi], who accompanied Sigurd, king of the Orkneys to Ireland in 1014, and was present at the battle of Clontarff, Ap. 23, of the same year. Antiq. Am. p. 211. note *a*.

† Thorkell Gellerson was great-grandson of Ari Marson, and uncle to Ari Frode, the writer of this narrative. He resided at Helgafell in Iceland, and was well known as a wealthy, honourable, and brave yeoman, who, desirous of knowledge, had travelled much in his youth. He related many things to his kinsman Ari Frode, who appears to have had the fullest confidence in his statements, and often gives his express words, together with his name, as a security for the truth of the narrative. Antiq. Amer. p. 212, note *a*.

‡ Thorfinn Sigurdson, b. 1008, d. 1064, was connected with the immediate ancestors of Ari Marson. See Genealog. Tab. No. 1, Appendix.

leif and Illugi: this is the family of Reykjaness. Jörund hight a son of Ulf the squinter; he married Thorbjörg Knarrarbringa; their daughter was Thjödhild, who married Erik the Red; their son [was] Leif the Lucky of Greenland. Jörund hight the son of Atli the Red; he married Thordis, daughter of Thorgeir Suda; their daughter was Otkatla, who married Thorgill Kollson. Jörund was also father to Snorri.

GEOGRAPHICAL FRAGMENT,

CORROBORATIVE OF THE PRECEDING.

B. From the Manuscript Codex, 770, c. 8vo.

Now are there, as is said, south from Greenland, which is inhabited, deserts, uninhabited places, and ice-bergs,* then the Skrælings, then Markland, then Vinland the Good; next, and somewhat behind,† lies Albania, which is White Man's Land;‡ thither was sailing, formerly, from Ireland; there Irishmen§ and Icelanders recognised Ari the son of Mar and Katla of Reykjaness, of whom nothing had been heard for a long time, and who had been made a Chief there by the inhabitants.

* Probably Labrador, or Great Helluland (Helluland it Mikla), see p. 88, note §.

† Nokkut til bakka.

‡ Hvitramannaland.

§ Yrskir.

VOYAGE OF BJÖRN ASBRANDSON

TO THE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE, AND PROBABLE SETTLEMENT IN

GREAT IRELAND.

A. D. 999.

The following remarkable narrative is taken from the Eyrbyggja Saga, or early annals of that district of Iceland lying around the promontory of Snæfells on the western coast. It is clearly shewn by Bishop Müller* to have been written not later than the beginning of the 13th century, and has been already brought before the favourable notice of the British public by Sir Walter Scott.† With this Saga the following MSS. have been carefully collated:—

1—2. Liber Chartaceus, No. 448, 449, 4to. being a copy of the best vellum codex in the Resenianian Library.

3. Copy of parchment codex in the Guelpher-

* Sagabibliothek, I. p. 197.

† Abstract of Eyrbyggja Saga. Miscell. Prose Works, Vol. V. 8vo. Edin. and Lond. 1834, and Illustrations of Northern Antiquities, 4to. Edinb. 1814. The learned Thorkelin, Regius Professor of Antiquity, and keeper of the Archives in the University of Copenhagen, published an edition of this history in 1787, executed at the expence of Suhm, the munificent patron of Northern literature. See Eyrbyggja Saga, quam mandante et impenses faciente Perill. P. F. Suhm, versione lectionum varietate ac indice rerum auxit Grimr Johnson Thorkelin, Prof. Philos. Extraord. Hafniæ, 1787.

bytean Library, carefully executed by Arne Magnussen himself.

4. Vellum fragment, No. 309, 4to. written in the 14th century.

5. Two vellum fragments noted 3 and 4, under No. 4156, 4to. written about the beginning of the 15th century.

Besides sixteen paper MSS. viz.:—No. 158, 126, 125, 123, 124, 129, 130, 131, Fol.; 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 4to. and 112, 8vo.

VOYAGE OF BJÖRN ASBRANDSON

TO THE

WESTERN HEMISPHERE & SETTLEMENT IN GREAT IRELAND.

A.D. 999.

15. Börk the fat and Thordis Surs daughter had a daughter that Thurid hight, and she was married to Thorbjörn the fat, who lived at Froda; he was son of Orm the lean, who had taken and cultivated the farm of Froda. Thurid, daughter of Asbrand of Kamb in Breidavik had he formerly married; she was sister to Björn Breidvikingahappa, who is hereafter mentioned in the Saga, and to Arnbjörn the strong: her sons by Thorbjörn were Ketill the Champion, Gunnlaug and Hallstein. . . . . .

22. Now shall something be told about Snorri Godi,* that he took up the process about the murder of Thorbjörn his brother-in-law. He also took his sister home to Helgafell, because there was a report, that Björn, son of Asbrand from Kamb, began to come there to inveigle her. . . . .

* *Godi*, Priest of the temple and prefect of the province, from *God* the Deity, being supposed to hold the office by divine appointment, see Introduc. p. vi. Snorri Godi occupies a conspicuous place in Icelandic history from the end of the 10th to the beginning of the 11th century; his real name was Thorgrim Thorgrimson, but being rather unmanageable when a child, he obtained the cognomen of Snerrir, from the Icelandic word *Snerrinn* pugnacious, which afterwards became Snorri. Müller. Sag. Bib. V. I. He was born in 964, and died in 1031, and hence it follows that the events recorded in this and the following narrative, where he is mentioned as an active participator, must have occurred previous to the year 1030. Various orthography has been followed by English writers with regard to the name, some calling it Snorro and others Snorre, but the final i seems to accord more with the Icelandic root. See Genealog. Tab. No. IV. App.

29. Thorodd, hight a man from Medallfellstrand: an honourable man; he was a great merchant, and owned a trading ship. Thorodd had made a trading voyage westwards to Ireland,* to Dublin. At that time had Jarl Sigurd Lödversson of the Orkneys,† sway to the Hebrides, and all the way westward to Man: he imposed a tribute on the inhabitants of Man, and when they had made peace, the Jarl left men behind him to collect the tribute; it was mostly paid in smelted silver; but the Jarl sailed away northwards to the Orkneys. But when they who had waited for the tribute, were ready for sailing, they put to sea with a south-west wind; but when they had sailed for a time the wind changed to the south-east and east, and there arose a great storm, and drove them northwards under Ireland, and the ship broke there asunder upon an uninhabited island. And when they had gotten there, came, by chance, the Icelander Thorodd, on a voyage from Dublin. The Jarl's men called out to the merchantmen‡ to help them. Thorodd put out a boat, and went into it himself, and when it came up, the Jarl's men begged Thorodd to help them, and

* Kaupferd vestr til Irlands. Here we see the nature of the voyage distinctly stated, and Ireland spoken of as lying *westwards* from Iceland, which evidently arose from its position with regard to Norway, the fatherland of the settlers; hence also, Vestmannaeyjar (Westman's Islands) on the south coast of Iceland, where some Irish captives took refuge after the murder of their northern task-master. See Petersen in Annal. for Nord. Oldk. 2836. Comp. p. 174, note.

† The Orkneys are called in northern language *Orkneyjar*, from *Orka*, a kind of seal, which is described in Speculum Regale, p. 176-177. Sigurd fell in battle in Ireland, 1013. Antiq. Amer. p. 218, note *b*.

‡ Kaupmenn, Comp. p. 180.

offered him money to take them home to Sigurd Jarl in the Orkneys; but Thorodd thought he could not do that, because he was bound for Iceland; but they pressed him hard, for they thought it concerned their goods and freedom, that they should not be left in Ireland or the Hebrides, where they before had waged war, and it ended so that he sold them the ship's boat, and took therefore a great part of the tribute; they steered then with the boat to the Orkneys; but Thorodd sailed without the boat to Iceland, and came to the south of the land; then steered he westwards, and sailed into Breidafjord, and landed, with all on board, at Dögurdarness, and went in autumn to winter with Snorri Godi at Helgafell; he was since then called Thorodd the tribute-buyer. This happened a little after the murder of Thorbjörn the fat. The same winter was at Helgafell Thurid the sister of Snorri Godi, whom Thorbjörn the fat had married. Thorodd asked Snorri Godi to give him Thurid his sister in marriage; and because he was rich, and Snorri knew him from a good side, and saw that she required some one to manage her affairs,—with all this together resolved Snorri Godi to give him the woman, and their marriage was held there in the winter at Helgafell. But in the following spring Thorodd betook himself to Froda, and became a good and upright yeoman.* But so soon as Thurid came to Froda, began Björn Asbrandson to visit there, and there was spread a general report

* Bondi.

that he and Thurid had unlawful intercourse; then began Thorodd to complain about his visits, but did not object to them seriously. At that time dwelled Thorer Vidlegg at Arnarhvol, and his sons Orn and Val were grown up, and very promising men; they reproached Thorodd for submitting to such disgrace as Björn put upon him, and offered Thorodd their assistance, if he would forbid the visits of Björn. It happened one time that Björn came to Froda, and he sat talking with Thurid. Thorodd used always to sit within when Björn was there, but now was he no where to be seen. Then said Thurid: "Take care of thy walks, Björn, for I suspect that Thorodd thinks to put an end to thy visits here, and it looks to me as if they had gone out to fall upon thee by the way, and he thinks they will not be met by equal force." "That can well be," said Björn, and chaunted this stave:—

O! Goddess of the arm-ring gold*
Let this bright day the longest hold
On earth, for now I linger here
In my love's arms, but soon must fear
These joys will vanish, and her breath
Be raised to mourn my early death.

Thereafter took Björn his arms, and went away, intending to go home; but when he had gotten up the Digramula, sprang five men upon him; this was Thorodd and two of his servants, and the sons of Thorer Vidlegg. They seized Björn, but he defended himself well and manfully; Thorer's sons

* *Jörd*, the earth, one of the many wives of Odin and mother of Thor.

"The son of earth
Is now arrived—
Why dost thou rage so, Thor!"
Ægirs Feast, Eld. Edd. Pigott's translat. p. 254.

pressed in hardest upon him, and wounded him, but he was the death of both of them. After that Thorodd went away with his men, and was a little wounded, but they not. Björn went his way until he came home, and went into the room; the woman of the house* told a maid servant to attend him; and when she came into the room with a light, then saw she that Björn was very bloody; she went then in, and told his father Asbrand that Björn was come home bloody; Asbrand went into the room, and asked why Björn was bloody; "or have you, perhaps, fallen in with Thorodd?" Björn answered that so it was. Asbrand then asked how the business had ended. Björn chaunted:—

Easier far it is to fondle,
In the arms of female fair,
(Vidlegg's sons I both have slain)
Than with valiant men to wrestle,
Or tamely purchased tribute† bear.

Then bound Asbrand his wounds, and he became quite restored. Thorodd begged Snorri Godi to manage the matter about Thorer's sons' murder, and Snorri had it brought before the court of Thorsness; but the sons of Thorlak of Eyra assisted Breidvikinga in this affair, and the upshot was, that Asbrand went security for his son Björn, and undertook to pay a fine for the murder. But Björn was banished for three years, and went away the same summer. During the same summer Thurid of Froda was delivered of a male child, which re-

* Húsfreyja—*Dan.* Hausfru—*Swed.* Husfru—*Ger.*—Hausfrau—literally the woman or lady of the house, and meaning, in this case, Björn's mother.

† In allusion to Thorodd's transaction with the crew of Sigurd. See ante p. 188, from which he obtained the surname of "*Tribute-buyer.*"

ceived the name of Kjartan; he grew up at Froda, and was soon large and promising.

Now when Björn had crossed the sea [to Norway], he bent his way southwards to Denmark, and therefrom south to Jomsborg.* Then was Palnatoki chief of the Jomsvikings. Björn joined their band, and was named Champion.† He was in Jomsborg when Styrbjörn the strong took the castle. Björn was also with them in Sweden, when the Jomsvikings aided Styrbjörn; he was also in the battle of Fyrisvall, where Styrbjörn fell,‡ and escaped in the wood with other Jomsvikings. And so long as Palnatoki lived,§ was Björn with him, and was

* Jomsborg (or Jom's castle), called also Julin, was built by the Danish King Harold Blaatand, on one of the mouths of the Oder, on the coast of Pomerania. It was afterwards governed by Palnatoki, a powerful chief of Fionia (Fynen), to whom Burislaus, King of the Wends, fearing his power, gave the neighbouring territory, on condition that he would defend the monarch's kingdom from foreign aggression. Palnatoki accepted the conditions, and became chief of a community of pirates called *Jomsvikingr*, who were distinguished, even in those days of brutal valour, for extraordinary personal bravery, and contempt of death. He established the strictest laws, and exacted the most rigid tests from those who sought to enter the society: the rank of *Kappi* or champion given to Björn Asbrandson, was, therefore, the strongest evidence of his eminent qualities as a warrior. Antiq. Amer. p. 227, note *a*.—Jomsvikinga Saga; and for the particular locality of Jomsborg, which is supposed to be the present Wollin, see De Danskes Toge, til Venden of N. M. Petersen ap. Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed, Kjöbenhavn, 1837. p. 235—238.

† Kappi.

‡ Styrbjörn was the son of Olaf who reigned in Sweden jointly with Erik the Victorious, but in consequence of aspiring to the throne and the murder of a courtier named Aki, fell into disgrace, and retired, with sixty ships given him by Erik, to Jomsborg, of which he became governor. Afterwards he made an expedition to Sweden in conjunction with Harald Gormson, and fell in battle against the King his uncle, in the plain of Fyrisvold near Upsala. A.D. 984. See Antiq. Amer. p. 227, note,—Fornmanna Sögur, Vol. V,— þattr Styrbjarnar Svia kappa in Cod. Flat., and Jomsvikinga Saga, Müller, Vol. 3.

§ Palnatoki died A.D. 993.

looked upon as a distinguished man, and very brave in all times of trial.

40 . . . . . The same summer* came the brothers Björn and Arnbjörn out to Iceland, to Raunhafnarsos. Björn was afterwards called the Champion of Breidavik.† Arnbjörn had brought much money out with him, and immediately, the same summer that he came, bought land at Bakke in Raunhöfn. Arnbjörn made no display, and spoke little on most occasions, but was, however, in all respects, a very able man. Björn, his brother, was, on the other hand, very pompous, when he came to the country, and lived in great style, for he had accustomed himself to the court usages of foreign chiefs; he was much handsomer than Arnbjörn, and in no particular less able, but was much more skilled in martial exercises, of which he had given proofs in foreign lands. In the summer, just after they had arrived, a great meeting of the people was held north of the heath, under Haugabret, near the mouth of the Froda; and thither rode all the merchants, in coloured garments;‡ and when they had come to the

* About the year 996. Antiq. Amer. p. 228. note *a*.

† Breidvikingakappi.

‡ "A similar fancy for party-coloured dresses," says Moore, "existed among the Celts of Gaul, and Diodorus describes the people as wearing garments flowered with all varieties of colours—*χρωμασι παντοδαποις διηνθισμενους*. Lib. 5. The braccæ or breeches was so called from being plaided, the word brac signifying in Celtic anything speckled or party-coloured." According to O'Brien the Hiberno-Celtic word is *breac*. In the reign of the Irish monarch Achy, a law was enacted regulating the number of colours by which the garments of the different classes of society were to be distinguished, and from these party-coloured dresses worn by the antient Scots or Irish, is derived the present national costume [still called *brekan*,] of their descendants in North Britain. Hist. Ir. I. pp. 109, 110,—O'Brien, Ir. Dic. in voce breac, Lluyd. Arch. Brit.

meeting, was there many people assembled. There was Thurid, the lady* of Froda, and Björn went up, and spoke to her, and no one objected to this, for it was thought likely that their discourse would last long, since they, for such a length of time, had not seen each other. There arose that day a fight, and one of the men from the northern mountains received a deadly wound, and was carried down under a bush on the bank of the river; much blood flowed from the wound, so that there was a pool of blood in the bush. There was the boy Kjartan, son of Thurid of Froda; he had a small axe in his hand; he ran to the bush, and dipped the axe in the blood. When the men from the southern mountains rode southwards from the meeting, Thord Blig asked Björn how the discourse had turned out betwixt him and Thurid of Froda. Björn said that he was well contented therewith. Then asked Thord, whether he had that day seen the lad Kjartan, her and Thorodd's united son. "Him saw I," said Björn. "What do you think of him?" quoth Thord, again. Then chaunted Björn this stave:

"A stripling lo!
With fearful eyes
And woman's image,
Downwards ran
To the wolf's lair;—
The people say
The youth knows not
His Viking father."

* *Húsfreyja.*

Thord said: "What will Thorodd say when he hears of your boy?" Then sung Björn:

"Then will the noble lady,
When pressing to her breast
The image of his father
In her fair arms to rest,
Admit Thorodd's conjecture,
For me she ever loved,
And ever shall I bear her
Affection deep and proved."

Thord said: "It will be better for ye, not to have much to do with each other, and that thou turn thy thoughts from Thurid." "That is surely a good counsel," replied Björn, "but far is that from my intention, although it makes some difference when I have to do with such a man as Snorri her brother." "Thou wilt be sorry for thy doings," said Thord, and therewith ended the talk between them. Björn went home now to Kamb, and took upon himself the management of the place, for his father was then dead. In the winter he began his trips over the heath, to visit Thurid; and although Thorodd did not like it, he yet saw that it was not easy to find a remedy, and he thought over with himself, how dearly it had cost him, when he sought to stop their intercourse; but he saw that Björn was now much stronger than before. Thorodd bribed, in the winter, Thorgrim Galdrakin to raise a tempest against Björn, when he was crossing the heath. Now it came to pass one day, that Björn came to Froda, and in the evening, when he was going home, was there thick weather, and some rain; and he set

off very late; but when he had gotten up on the heath, the weather became cold, and it snowed; and so dark that he saw not the way before him. After that arose a drift of snow, with so much sleet, that he could scarcely keep his legs; his clothes were now frozen, for he was before wet through, and he strayed about, so that he knew not where to turn; hit, at night, upon the edge of a cave, went in, and was there for the night, and had a cold lodging; then sung Björn:—

"Fair one! who dost bring
Vestments to the weary,*
Little know'st thou where
Hid in cavern dreary,
I now shelter seek;
He that once on ocean
Boldly steered a bark,
Now lies without motion
In a cavern dark."

And again he chaunted:

"The swan's cold region† I have crossed
All eastwards with a goodly freight,
For woman's love, by tempest tost
And seeking danger in the fight:
But now no woman's couch I tread,
A rocky cavern is my bed."

Björn remained three days in the cave, before the weather moderated; but on the fourth day came he home from the heath to Kamb. He was much ex-

* To the women of the Northern family was more particularly entrusted the duties of hospitality, among which was included that of bringing dry garments to the traveller who had suffered from the tempestuousness of the weather. Antiq. Amer. p. 236, note *a*.

† *Svana-fold*, the region of swans, i. e. water, poet. the sea. Antiq. Amer. p. 237, note *a*.

hausted. The servants asked him where he had been during the tempest—Björn sang:

"Well my deeds are known
Under Styrbjörn's banner,
Steel-clad Erik slew
Gallant men in battle;
Now on mountain wild,
Met by magic shower,
Outlet could not find
From the Witches power."*

Björn was now at home for the winter. In spring his brother Arnbjörn fixed his residence at Bakka in Raunhöfn, but Björn lived at Kamb, and kept a splendid house. . . . . .

47. The same summer bade Thorodd the tribute-buyer his brother-in-law Snorri Godi to a feast at home at Froda, and Snorri betook himself thither with twenty men. And while Snorri was at the feast, disclosed Thorodd to him, how he felt himself both disgraced and injured by the visits which Björn Asbrandson made to Thurid his wife, but sister to Snorri Godi: Thorodd said that Snorri should remedy this bad business. Snorri was there a few days, and Thorodd gave him costly presents

* These poetical effusions of Björn may, perhaps, appear somewhat improbable to British readers, but, as has been shewn in the Introduction, the Northmen of this period, exhibited great readiness in a species of rude versification, the melody of which was chiefly formed on alliteration. "As late as the time of Chaucer," says Sir Walter Scott, "it was considered as the mark of a Northern man to 'affect the letter.'" And his parson thus apologizes for not reciting a piece of poetry:—

"But trusteth wel I am a Sotherne man,
I cannot geste *rom, rum, raf*, by my letter,
And God wot, rime hold I but little better."

Abstract of Eyrbyggja Saga.

"Cette singuliére maniére de s'exprimer etoit pourtant assez commune, et peut marquer seule combien ces peuples faisoient de cas de la Poesie."—Mallet. Introduc. a l'hist. de Dannemarc, p. 247.

when he went away. Snorri Godi rode from thence over the heath, and gave out that he was going to the ship in the bay of Raunhafn. This was in summer, at the time of haymaking. But when they came south on Kamb's heath, then said Snorri: "Now will we ride from the heath down to Kamb, and I will tell you," said he, "that I will visit Björn, and take his life, if opportunity offers, but not attack him in the house, for the buildings are strong here, and Björn is strong and hardy, and we have but little force; and it is well known, that men who have come, even so, with great force, have, with little success, attacked such valiant men, inside in the house, as was the case with Geir Godi, and Gissur the white, when they attacked Gunnar of Lidarend, in his house, with eighty men, but he was there alone, and nevertheless were some wounded, and others killed; and they had staid the attack, had not Geir Godi, with his heedfulness, observed that he was short of arms.* But forasmuch as," continued he, "Björn is now out, which may be expected, as it is good drying weather, so appoint I thee, my kinsman Mar, to fetch Björn the first wound; but consider well, that he is no man to trifle with, and that, wherever he is, you may expect a hard blow from a savage wolf, if he, at the onset, receives not such a wound as will cause his death." And now when they rode down from the moor to the farm,† saw they that Björn was out in the

* Confer. Njála, c. 77, 78. Landnam. p. 5, c. 5.

† Banum, *Dan.* Gaard.

homestead,* working at a sledge,† and there was nobody with him, and no weapons had he except a little axe, and a large knife, of a span's length from the haft, which he used for boring the holes in the sledge. Björn saw that Snorri Godi with his followers rode down from the moor, into the field, and knew them immediately. Snorri Godi was in a blue cloak, and rode in front. Björn made an immediate resolve, and took the knife, and went straight towards them; when they came together, he seized with the one hand, the arm of Snorri's cloak, and with the other, held he the knife in such a manner as was most easy for him to stab Snorri through the breast, if he should think fit to do so. Björn greeted them, as they met, and Snorri greeted him again; but Mar dropped his hands, for it struck him that Björn could soon hurt Snorri, if any injury was done to him. Upon this Björn went with them on their way, and asked what news they had, but held himself in the same position which he had taken at the first. Then took up Björn the discourse in this manner: "It stands truly so, friend Snorri, that I conceal not I have acted towards you, in such wise, that you may well accuse me, and I have been told, that you have a hostile intention towards me. Now it seems to me best," continued he, "that if you have any business with me, other than passing by here to the high road, you should let me

*Tunvelli. *Dan.* hjemme marken.

† Small wooden unshod sledges are used in Scandinavia for drawing in hay to the haggart, in the summer season.

know it; but be that not the case, then would I that you grant me peace, and I will then turn back, for I go not in leading strings." Snorri answered: "Such a lucky grip took thou of me at our meeting, that thou must have peace this time, however it may have been determined before; but this I beg of thee, that from henceforth, thou cease to inveigle Thurid, for it will not end well between us, if thou, in this respect, continue as thou hast begun." Björn replied: "That only will I promise thee, which I can perform, but I see not, how I can hold to this, so long as Thurid and I are in the same district." "Thou art not so much bound to this place," answered Snorri, "but that thou couldest easily give up thy residence here." Björn replied: "True is that which thou sayest, and thus shall it be, since you have yourself come to me, and as our meeting has thus turned out will I promise thee, that Thorodd and thou shalt have no more trouble about my visits to Thuridd for the next year." After this, they separated; Snorri Godi rode to the ship, and then home to Helgafell. The day following rode Björn southwards to Raunhöfn to go to sea, and he got immediately, in the summer, a place in a ship, and they were very soon ready. They put to sea with a north-east wind, which wind lasted long during the summer; but of this ship was nothing heard since this long time.

The following narrative will shew that Björn was driven to that part of the eastern coast of North America, where White Man's Land, or GREAT IRELAND was supposed by the Northmen to be situated, and where, thirty years afterwards, (1029,) Gudleif Gudlaugson, driven in the same direction by easterly winds, recognised his countryman in a Chief, to whose position and influence both he and his companions were indebted for a safe return to their native land. This narrative is contained in the same Saga from whence the preceding has been derived; but before introducing the second period in the history of Björn Asbrandson to the notice of the reader, a short sketch from the able pen of Bishop Müller, of the general characteristics of the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, its high position among Icelandic MSS. its well authenticated details, and its consequent claims to credibility as regards all the leading incidents which it records, will serve to place the two narratives in their proper light, and render the whole more worthy of consideration in a historical point of view:

"This Saga contains a number of occurrences and names of persons that are also mentioned in other places. Thorolf Mostrarskeg's death is fixed by the annals in 918; of him and his son Thorstein much is to be found in the Landnámabók, p. 92, seq.; Thorgrim Thorsteinson's death is related at length in Gisle Surson's Saga; the Landnáma mentions the most of Snorri's actions; the Annals record his birth in 964, and his death in 1031 . . . . Besides, many of the persons named here are also mentioned in the Kristnisaga, and many are to be found in the Niala and Laxdæla Sagas."

"The author cites the testimony of Ari Frode, p. 16; he remarks himself that Snorri appears in many other Sagas, and expressly mentions p. 334, Laxdæla Saga, and Heidarviga Saga. In p. 336, certain circumstances are stated to have thus happened "according to what most

people said;" in p. 174, we read "one sees still the mark of the new barrow, which Arnkel raised over his father, and where he made a fence across, so that no animal should come there." In p. 195, it is stated: "at that time it was the merchants' custom that they had no cook on board ship, but that all the ship's company should take it in turn to cook the victuals: there should also stand a covered can with drink by the sail." These expressions prove that the writer of this Saga lived some time after the events which he here relates; that already a part of the Saga was current, and that from these statements, and other individual oral relations, he put his work together."

"Again: verses are often introduced, as well by the acting persons as other Skalds who sung of the events. These must, therefore, on the whole, be considered credible, and contain many, not unimportant characteristics of the times. Traces of later decoration appear in the description of the hardihood of those who were wounded at the battle of Alptefjord, p. 44, and of Thorgunna's witchcraft, p. 50, seq. but it is only natural that somewhat more of superstition should appear in this than in many other Sagas, and the circumstance proves nothing against its antiquity. The greater number of these embellishments are no more than what we commonly find, where such superstitious faith is entertained, and the additions are accordant with the credulity of the times. The Eyrbyggja Saga is expressly quoted in the Landnámabók, p. 84. Besides, we can determine the date of this with greater accuracy than that of most other Sagas: it must have been written before 1264, when Iceland became subject to Norway, because it is stated, p. 11: "All should pay tribute to the temple, and be liable for the journeys of the Chief, just as in the present time, the Thingmen for their Chief:" hence it follows, that the aristocratic form of society, which ceased when the island became subject to Norway, must have ex-

isted at the period in question.* The Saga must also have been written whilst Thord Sturleson and his mother yet lived, for it says, p. 338: "when the church which Snorri Godi had built was removed, his bones were taken up, and brought down to the place where the church now stands; there were present Gudny Bodvar's daughter, Thord and Sighvat Sturleson's mother; and Thord Sturleson says, that they were the bones of a middle sized man, and not large. There were also taken up the bones of Börk the fat, Snorri Godi's uncle: they were very large; also was taken up the wife of Thordis, Thorbjörn Surs' daughter, Snorri Godi's mother. Gudny says that they were small women's bones, and as black as if they were singed." This proves that the writer of the Saga was present with Thord Sturleson, and his mother. Gudny died in the year 1220 odd, and the Saga must therefore have been written in the beginning of the 13th century."

Müllers Sagabibliothek, 1 B. p. 195, seq.

* See Introduction, pp. v. vi.

VOYAGE OF GUDLEIF GUDLAUGSON

TO

GREAT IRELAND.

A. D. 1029.

EYRBYGGJA SAGA, CAP. 64. VELLUM FRAGMENT, No. 4456, in 4to.

Collated with the before mentioned MSS.

64. Gudleif hight a man; he was son of Gudlaug the rich, of Straumfjord, and brother of Thorfinn, from whom the Sturlungers are descended. Gudleif was a great merchant,* he had a merchant ship, but Thorolf Eyrar Loptson had another, that time they fought against Gyrd, son of Sigvald Jarl; then lost Gyrd his eye. It happened in the last years of the reign of King Olaf the Saint, that Gudleif undertook a trading voyage to Dublin;† but when he sailed from the west, intended he to sail to Iceland; he sailed then from the west of Ireland,‡ and met with north-east winds, and was driven far to the west, and south-west, in the sea, where no land was to be seen. But it was already far gone in the summer, and they made many prayers that they might escape from the sea; and it came to pass that they saw land. It was a great land, but they knew not what land it was. Then took they the resolve to sail to the land, for they were weary of

* Farmadr mikill.

† Some of the MSS. add "*vestr*," shewing that Ireland was spoken of as lying westwards from Iceland.

‡ Probably Limerick, which was much frequented by the Northmen.

contending longer with the violence of the sea. They found there a good harbour; and when they had been a short time on shore, came people to them: they knew none of the people, *but it rather appeared to them that they spoke Irish.** Soon came to them so great a number that it made up many hundreds. These men fell upon them and seized them all, and bound them, and drove them up the country. There were they brought before an assembly, to be judged. *They understood so much* that some were for killing them, but others would have them distributed amongst the inhabitants, and made slaves. And while this was going on, saw they, where rode a great body of men, and a large banner was borne in the midst. Then thought they that there must be a chief in the troop; but when it came near, saw they that under the banner rode a large and dignified man, who was much in years, and whose hair was white. All present bowed down before the man, and received him as well as they could. Now observed they that all opinions and resolutions concerning their business, were submitted to his decision. Then ordered this man Gudleif and his companions to be brought before him, and when they had come before this man, spoke he to them in

* "En helzt þotti þeim, sem þeir mælti irsku." This is a very remarkable passage, and affords the strongest grounds for believing that the country to which they were driven, had been previously colonized from Ireland. The Northmen, from their intercourse with the Irish ports, might be supposed to have had just sufficient knowledge of the language to detect its sounds (here probably corrupted), and understand the general meaning of the words. See infra.

the Northern tongue,* and asked them from what country they came. They answered him, that the most of them were Icelanders. The man asked which of them were Icelanders? Gudleif said that he was an Icelander. He then saluted the old man, and he received it well, and asked from what part of Iceland he came. Gudleif said that he was from that district† which hight Borgafjord. Then enquired he from what part of Borgafjord he came, and Gudleif answered just as it was. Then asked this man about almost every one of the principal men in Borgafjord and Breidafjord; and when they talked thereon, enquired he minutely about every thing, first of Snorri Godi, and his sister Thurid of Froda, and most about Kjartan her son. The people of the country now called out, on the other side, that some decision should be made about the seamen. After this went the great man away from them, and named twelve of his men with himself, and they sat a long time talking. Then went they to the meeting of the people, and the old man said to Gudleif: "I and the people of the country have talked together about your business, and the people have left the matter to me; but I will now give ye leave to depart whence ye will; but although ye may think that the summer is almost gone, yet will I counsel ye to remove from hence, for here are the people not to be trusted, and bad to deal with, and they think besides that the laws have been broken to their injury." Gudleif answered: "What

* Norrænu, see ante, p. 67, note. † Harrad.

shall we say, if fate permits us to return to our own country, who has given us this freedom?" He answered: "That can I not tell you, for I like not that my relations and foster-brothers should make such a journey hereto, as ye would have made, if ye had not had the benefit of my help; but now is my age so advanced, that I may expect every hour old age to overpower me; and even if I could live yet for a time, there are here more powerful men than me, who little peace would give to foreigners that might come here, although they be not just here in the neighbourhood where ye landed." Then caused he their ship to be made ready for sea, and was there with them, until a fair wind sprung up, which was favourable to take them from the land. But before they separated took this man a gold ring from his hand, and gave it into the hands of Gudleif, and therewith a good sword; then said he to Gudleif: "If the fates permit you to come to your own country, then shall you take this sword to the yeoman, Kjartan of Froda, but the ring to Thurid his mother." Gudleif replied: "What shall I say, about it, as to who sends them these valuables?" He answered: "Say that he sends them who was a better friend of the lady of Froda, than of her brother, Godi of Helgafell; but if any man therefore thinks that he knows who has owned these articles, then say these my words, that I forbid any one to come to me, for it is the most dangerous expedition, unless it happens as fortunately with others at the landing place, as with you; but here is the land

great, and bad as to harbours, and in all parts may strangers expect hostility, when it does not turn out as has been with you." After this, Gudleif and his people put to sea, and they landed in Ireland late in harvest, and were in Dublin for the winter. But in the summer after, sailed they to Iceland, and Gudleif delivered over there these valuables; and people held it for certain, that this man was BJÖRN, THE CHAMPION OF BREIDAVIK, and no other account to be relied on is there in confirmation of this, except that which is now given here.

The reader will no doubt come to the same conclusion drawn by the Icelanders respecting the identity of the aged chief, to whose generosity and friendly feeling Gudleif and his companions were so much indebted, and unhesitatingly pronounce him to have been none other than BJÖRN ASBRANDSON, THE CHAMPION OF BREIDAVIK, who, it will be remembered, had set sail about thirty years before, with a north-east wind, and had not since been heard of.* The remarkable accordance of all the personal details, to which the writer evidently attaches the principal importance, with the historical events, which are only incidentally alluded to, enable us to determine dates and intervals of time with a degree of accuracy that places the truth of the narrative beyond all question, and gives a high degree of interest to these two voyages. The mention of Sigurd Jarl of the Orkneys, Palnatoki, Styrbjörn the nephew of Erik of Sweden, the battle of Fyrisvold, Snorri Godi, "the latter part of the reign of king Olaf the saint," gives a chronological character to the narratives, and enables us to fix

* See ante, p. 199.

with confidence, nearly the exact period of the principal events. Hence it appears that Gudleif Gudlaugson, sailing from the west of Ireland in the year 1029, with a N. E. wind, is driven far to the south and south-west, where no land was to be seen, and that after being exposed for many days to the violence of the winds and waves, he at length finds shelter upon a coast, where Björn Asbrandson, who had left Iceland with N. E. winds thirty years before, had become established as chief of the inhabitants of the country. He finds him, as might naturally have been expected, "stricken in years," and "his hair was white," for Björn had left Iceland for Jomsborg in the prime of life, had, after taking part in the achievements of the Jomsvikings up to the death of Palnatoki in 993, returned to and resided in Iceland until 999, and now thirty winters had passed over his head since his ultimate departure from his native land. The locality of the newly discovered country is next to be determined: Now if a line be drawn running N. E. and S. W. the course of Björn Asbrandson, from the western coast of Iceland, and another in the same direction (the course of Gudleif Gudlaugson) from the west coast of Ireland, they would intersect each other on the southern shores of the United States, somewhere about Carolina or Georgia. This position accords well with the description of the locality of their country, given by the Skrælings to Thorfinn Karlsefne, and which the Northmen believed to be White Man's Land or GREAT IRELAND,* as also with the geographical notices of the same land which have been already adduced;† and when to these evidences be added the statements of Gudleif and his companions respecting the language of the natives, "*which appeared to them to be Irish*,"‡ there is every reason to conclude that this was the Hvitramannaland, Albania, or Irland ed mikla of the Northmen.

* See ante, p. 103. † Ante, p. 183. ‡ Ante, p. 204.

The notices of the country contained in these two narratives are, doubtless, scanty, and merely incidental, the object of the narrators being evidently to trace the romantic and adventurous career of the Champion of Breidavik, and the perilous voyage of his countrymen, but this very circumstance is an argument in favour of the honesty of the statement as regards the supposed Irish settlement; and the simple and unpretending character of both narratives, supported, as they are, by historical references, confirmatory of the principal events, gives to these incidental allusions a degree of importance to which they would not otherwise be entitled.

Professor Rafn is of opinion that the White Man's Land, or Great Ireland of the Northmen was the country situated to the south of Chesapeake Bay, including North and South Carolina, Georgia, and East Florida.* It is well known that the Esquimaux Indians formerly inhabited countries much further south than they do at present, and a very remarkable tradition is stated to be still preserved amongst the Shawanese Indians, who emigrated 87 years ago, from West Florida to Ohio, that Florida was once *inhabited by white men, who used iron instruments.*† A German writer also mentions an old tradition of the ancestors of the Shawanese having come *from beyond the sea.*‡

Various circumstances shew that GREAT IRELAND was a country, of the existence of which the Icelandic historians had no doubt; it is spoken of in the Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne as a country well known by name to the Northmen; in the account of Ari Marson's voyage, and the geo-

* Antiq. Amer. p. 448. See Map, Plate II. It might also have extended towards the Isthmus of America. See infra, p. 213, seq.

† Account of the present state of the Indian tribes inhabiting Ohio, in Archæologia Americana, I. p. 273-276. ap. Rafn.

‡ Assals Nachrichten über die fruheren Einwohner von Nord America und ihre Denkmäler, p. 87. ap. Rafn. in Antiq. Amer. p. 448, note *a*.

graphical fragment, its position is pointed out :—"west from Ireland, near Vinland the good"—"next and somewhat behind Vinland,"* and the following extract, taken from the collection of Björn Johnson, will shew that a Chart had actually been made of this distant land :—

"Sir Erlend Thordson had obtained from abroad the geographical chart of that Albania, or land of the White men, which is situated opposite Vinland the good, of which mention has been before made in this little book, and which the merchants formerly called HIBERNIA MAJOR or GREAT IRELAND, and lies, as has been said, to the west of Ireland proper. This chart had held accurately all those tracts of land, and the boundaries of Markland, Einfœtingjaland, and little Helluland, together with Greenland, to the west of it, where apparently begins the good Terra Florida."† This Sir‡ Erlend was priest of the parish of Staden in Steingrimsfjord, on the west coast of Iceland, in the year 1568,§ but no further information has been obtained respecting the chart, which probably contained the outlines of all the countries known to the Northmen soon after their discovery of the American continent.

From what cause could the name of GREAT IRELAND have arisen, but from the fact of the country having been colonized by the Irish? Coming from their own green island to a vast continent possessing many of the fertile qualities of their native soil, the appellation would have

* See ante, p. 183.

† Sira Erlendr heitinn Þórdarson, hafdi yfirkomizt utanlands landatöblu um Þà Albania edr Hvitramannaland, sem liggr gagnvart Vinlandi hinu gòda, ok àdr er umrœdt i þessum bæklingi, ok kaupmenn fordum nefna *Hybernia Major* edr *Irland hid Mikla*, ok liggr, sem ádr greinir, vestr frá almenniligu Irlandi. Sù tabla hafdi haldit fródliga um þessa alla landaklasa ok rœtur, Marklands, Einfœtingja, ok litla Hellulands sampt ok Grœnlands vestr þangat, sem sérdeilis til tók sù góda Terra Florida." Antiq. Amer. p. 448, note *b*.

‡ Sir was formerly the English title for a priest, see Spenser.

§ Antiq. Amer. p. 449, note *b*.

been natural and appropriate; and costume, colour, or peculiar habits, might have readily given rise to the country being denominated White Man's Land by the neighbouring Esquimaux.* Nor does this conclusion involve any improbability: we have seen that the Irish visited and inhabited Iceland towards the close of the 8th century, to have accomplished which they must have traversed a stormy ocean to the extent of about 800 miles; that a hundred years before the time of Dicuil, namely in the year 725, they had been found upon the Farœ islands; that in the 10th century, voyages between Iceland and Ireland were of ordinary occurrence; and that in the beginning of the 11th century, White Man's Land or GREAT IRELAND is mentioned, — not as a newly discovered country, — but as a land *long known by name* to the Northmen. Neither the Icelandic historians or navigators were, in the least degree, interested in originating or giving currency to any fable respecting an Irish settlement on the southern shores of North America, for they set up no claim to the discovery of that part of the Western continent, their intercourse being limited to the coasts north of Chesapeake Bay. The discovery of Vinland and Great Ireland appear to have been totally independent of each other: the latter is only incidentally alluded to by the Northern navigators; with the name they were familiar, but of the peculiar locality of the country they were ignorant, nor was it until after the return of Karlsefne from Vinland in 1011, and the information which he obtained from the Skrælings or Esquimaux who were captured during the voyage, that the Northmen became convinced that White Man's Land or Great Ireland was a part of the same vast continent, of which Helluland, Markland, and Vinland formed portions.

The traces of Irish origin which have been observed among some of the Indian tribes of North and Central America tend also to strengthen the presumption that these countries had

* See infra, p. 215.

been colonized from Ireland at some remote period of time.* Rask, the eminent Danish philologist, leans to this opinion, which he founds upon the early voyages of the Irish to Iceland and the similitude between the Hiberno-Celtic, and American Indian dialects. "It is well known," he says, "that Iceland was discovered and partially inhabited by the Irish before its discovery and occupation by the Scandinavians; and when we find that the Icelanders, descended from the Scandinavians, discovered North America, it will appear less improbable that the Irish, who, at that period, were more advanced in learning and civilization, should have undertaken similar expeditions with success:"† the name of *Irland it Mikla* he also considers to be a sufficient indication of the Irish having emigrated thither from their own country.

It seems to be generally admitted by historians and antiquaries that the main stream of colonization has flowed from east to west, the Celts preceding the Teutonic and Sarmatian races, by a long interval of time. Herodotus, four centuries before the Christian era, places the Celts beyond the pillars of Hercules, and upon the borders of the most westerly region in Europe,‡ and Cæsar in the first century finds them in Gaul and Britain; that their successors, the Goths, should have driven them to seek for regions still further westward is therefore in full accordance with the course of their former migrations, and the same nomadic principle which brought them from Asia to the British isles, might have wafted them in later ages to the western world.

The illustrious Leibnitz seems to have contemplated the

* In indigenis Americæ Septemtrionalis reperiri quædam Hibernicæ originis vestigia, plures docti et experti viri observaverunt. Rafn in Antiq. Amer. p. 449.

† Samlede Afhandlinger, B. 1, p. 165.

‡ οἱ δὲ Κελτοί εἰσι ἔξω Ἡρακληίων στηλέων· ὁμουρέουσι δὲ Κυνησίοισι, οἵ ἐσχατοι πρὸς δυσμέων οἰκέουσι τῶν εν τῇ Εὐρωπῃ κατοικημένων.

Euterp. xxxiii. Melpom. xlix.

possibility of such a remote Celtic settlement when he wrote:—"And if there be *any island beyond Ireland,* where *the Celtic language* is in use, by the help thereof we should be guided, as by a thread, to the knowledge of still more antient things."*

The remarkable narrative of Lionel Wafer who resided for several months amongst the inhabitants of the Isthmus of America, contains some remarkable passages bearing upon this subject, and which, as the author had no preconceived opinions on the affinity of languages, or favourite theory to uphold, are deserving of notice: speaking of their language, he says:—

"My knowledge of the Highland language made me the more capable of learning the Darien Indians' language, when I was among them, for there is some affinity; not in the signification of the words of each language, but in the pronunciation, which I could easily imitate, both being spoken pretty much in the throat, with frequent aspirates, and much the same sharp or circumflex tang or cant."† This writer, however, had evidently not paid much attention to the affinities of the two languages which he compares and finds only to resemble in pronunciation, for many of the words which he afterwards adduces as examples of the Indian language, bear a marked similitude to those of the Celtic, as may readily be seen by the following comparison:—

* "Et si ultra Hiberniam esset aliqua insula Celtici sermonis, ejus filo in multo adhuc antiquiora duceremur." Leibnitzius, Collect. Etymol. Vol. I. p. 153.

† A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America, giving an account of the author's abode there, the Indian inhabitants, their manners, customs, language, &c. by Lionel Wafer, London, 1699, p. 186. This author is one of Dr. Robertson's authorities, and described by that eminent historian as "a traveller possessing more curiosity and intelligence than we should have expected to find in an associate of Buccaneers." Hist. Amer. Vol. V. of Works, p. 294: Wafer appears to have been surgeon in a privateer.

American-Indian.	Celtic.
Tautah—Father . .	*Taduys* (Welsh), *Tad* (Corn.) *Tat* (Armoric) *Dad* or *Daddy* (vulg. Irish)
Namah—Mother. .	*Naing* (Irish).
Poonah—Woman . .	*Bean* (Ir.) *Bun* (Armor.)
Neenah—Girl . .	*Neean* (antient Scotch).
Nee—the Moon . .	*Neul*, a star—light—neultaib njme, the stars of heaven (Ir.).
Eechah (pron. Eetsha)—Ugly	*Etseact*—Death (Ir.)—the ugliest of all things.
Paeechah—Foh! Ugly! .	*Pah*, prefixed to a word in Welsh augments its signification.
Eechah Malooquah, an expression of great dislike .	*Malluighe* or *malluigte*, cursed, accursed (Irish).
Cotchah, sleep . .	*Codalta* and *Codaltac*, sleepy (Ir.).
Caupah (pron. Capa), hammock	*Cába*, a cloak, *Caban*, tent, cottage (Ir.) *Gaban*, ib. (Welsh).
Eetah, got .	*Ed*, to take, handle (Irish).
Doolah, water . .	*Tuile*, a flood (Ir.).
Copah, drink . .	*Ceóbac*, drunkenness (Ir.)
Mamaumah, fine .	*Ma, ma, ba*, would be nearly the sound of the repetition of the word *ba* which signifies *good* in Irish: the m and b are also often used indiscriminately. See O'Brien—Remarks on letter M.
Eenah, to call . .	*Enwi*, to name (Welsh), *Henu*, a name (Armor.).

Wafer further says: "Their way of reckoning from score to score is no more than what our old English way was, but their saying, instead of thirty-one, thirty-two, &c. one score and eleven, one score and twelve, &c. is much like the Highlanders of Scotland and Ireland, reckoning eleven and twenty, twelve and twenty, &c.; so for fifty-three, the Highlanders say thirteen and two score, as the Darien Indians would two score and thirteen, only changing the place. In my youth I was well acquainted with the Highland or primitive Irish language, both as it is spoken in the north of Ireland, particularly at the Navan upon the

Boyne, and about the town of Virgini upon Lough Rammer in the Barony of Castle Raghen, in the County of Cavan; and also in the Highlands of Scotland, where I have been up and down in several places. . . . . I learned a great deal of the Darien language in a month's conversation with them."*

Wafer's description of the dress of this tribe of American Indians, presents also a remarkable coincidence with the short notices of the inhabitants of WHITE MAN'S LAND, as given to Karlsefne by the Esquimaux:—

"They have a sort of long cotton garment of their own, some *white*, others of a rusty black, shaped like our carters' frocks, hanging down to their heels, with a fringe of the same of cotton, about a span long, and short, wide, open sleeves, reaching but to the middle of the arms. These garments they put on over their heads. . . . When they are thus assembled, they will sometimes walk about the place, or plantation, where they are, with these their robes on; and I once saw Lacenta (a chief) thus walking about, with two or three hundred of these attending him, as if he was mustering them: and I took notice that those in the black gowns walked before him, *and the white after him, each having their lances of the same colour with their robes*†. . . . They were all in their finest robes, which are *long white gowns*, reaching to their ancles, with fringes at the bottom, and in their hands they had half pikes."‡

* Wafer's New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America, &c. pp. 183, 184, 186.

† Confer. Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne, p. 103.

‡ Wafer's Voyages, &c. pp. 37, 142. This author also makes mention of *white* people in the Isthmus of America, similar to the *Albinos* of Africa, which are not, however, he says, a distinct race, but are occasionally the progeny of copper-coloured parents (p. 137). Humboldt also mentions the circumstance of fair children being born of dark coloured American Indians, (Ed. Cab. Lib. x. p. 120,) shewing how little dependance is to be placed on skin or complexion as indications of race.

The affinity between the American-Indian and Celtic languages, and consequent probability of an European settlement having been formed upon the shores of New Spain before the arrival of the Spaniards, appears to have been entertained by many writers of eminence in the 17th century.* In the remarkable work entitled the "Turkish Spy," we find the author positively affirming the similarity of the two languages, and stating the tradition of an early European settlement:

"This prince (Charles II.) has several nations under his dominions, and 'tis thought he scarce knows the just extent of his territories in America. There is a region in that continent inhabited by a people whom they call Tuscorards and Doegs. *Their language is the same as is spoken by the British or Welsh.* . . Those Tuscorards and Doegs of America are thought to descend from them. . . It is certain, that when the Spaniards first conquered Mexico, they were surprised to hear the inhabitants discourse of a strange people, that formerly *came thither in corraughs,*† who taught them the knowledge of God, and of immortality, instructed them also in virtue and morality, and prescribed holy rites and ceremonies of religion. 'Tis remarkable also, what an Indian King said to a Spaniard, viz.: That in foregoing ages, a strange people arrived there by sea, to whom his ancestors gave hospitable entertainment; in regard they found them men of wit and courage, endued also with many other excellencies: but he could give no account of their original or name. . . . The British language is so prevalent here, that the very towns, bridges, beasts, birds, rivers, hills, &c. are

* See Baumgarten, Allgemeine Geschichte der Länder und Volcker von America, P. i. c. i. p. 27. Pere Charleroi ap. Mallet. Introduc. a l'histoire de Dannemarc, pp. 188, 189.

† This is a good commentary upon the statement of Cambrensis, who describes the curraghs as so little sea-worthy, that the tail of a salmon would upset them!—See Topog. Hibern.

called by British or Welsh names."* "Who can tell," truly adds the author, "the various transmigrations of mortals on earth, or trace out the true originals of any people"?

The improbability of the Irish having, at any very remote period of time, been in possession of vessels of sufficient power and capacity to enable them to accomplish a voyage across the Atlantic, may, perhaps, be urged as an objection to this supposed early migration to the American coast; but, without resting upon their antient Spanish or Carthaginian connexion, a very little enquiry will shew, that, at least in the first centuries of the Christian era, they were amply provided with the means of accomplishing a voyage to the New World, which, from the western coast of Ireland, little exceeds 1600 miles.†

O'Halloran states, on the authority of the Psalter of Cashel, said to be the oldest Irish MS., that Moghcorb, King of Leath Mogha, or Munster, prepared *a large fleet* in the year 296, and invaded Denmark; and that in the following century, (A. D. 367), Criomthan, who in the Psalter of Cashel is styled Monarch of Ireland and Albany, and leader of the Franks and Saxons, prepared a formidable fleet, and raised a large body of troops, which were transported to Scotland, for the purpose of acting in conjunction with the Picts and Saxons, against the Roman wall, and devastating

* "Letters writ by a Turkish Spy, who lived five and forty years undiscovered in Paris, giving an impartial account to the Divan at Constantinople, of the most remarkable transactions of Europe, &c. from the year 1673 to the year 1682; written originally in Arabic, 10th edition, London, 1734."—Vol. 8, p. 159, seq. The real author of this work, which caused a great sensation at the time, as well from the highly interesting character of its contents, as from the profound secrecy in which the name of the writer was long involved, was John Paul Marana, a native of Italy. See D'Israeli's Curios. Lit.

† "Newfoundland is the nearest part of America to Europe; the distance from St. John's, in Newfoundland, to Port Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland, being 1656 miles." Hist. of Brit. Colonies, by Montgomery Martin, Vol. III. p. 455, note.

the provinces of Britain.* In 396, an expedition, upon a most extensive and formidable scale, was undertaken by the celebrated Niall of the Nine Hostages, one of the most distinguished princes of the Milesian race: "Observing," says Moore, "that the Romans, after breaking up the line of encampment along the coast opposite to Ireland, had retired to the eastern shore, and the northern wall, Niall perceived that an apt opportunity was thus offered for a descent upon the now unprotected territory. Instantly summoning, therefore, all the forces of the island, and embarking them on board such *ships* as he could collect, he ranged, with his *numerous navy*, along the whole coast of Lancashire," &c.† It was to this expedition that the poet Claudian, lauding the achievement of his patron Stilicho, alluded, in the memorable lines:—

> Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus, inquit,
> Munivit Stilico. Totam cum Scotus Iernem
> Movit et infesto spumavit remige Thetys.
>
> By him defended, when the neighbouring hosts
> Of warlike nations spread along our coasts;
> When Scots ‡ came thundering from the Irish shores,
> And the wide ocean foamed from hostile oars.
>
> De Laudab. Stil. Lib. 2.

* Vol. II. pp. 281, 293.

† Hist. Ireland, Vol. I. p. 150.

‡ The Irish are supposed to have obtained the name of Scots or Scoti from the Scotic or Scythic origin of the Spanish settlers under the sons of Milesius, whose invasion Moore places "about a century or two" before the Christian era; other more enthusiastic national historians take us back to 800 years before that period; and O'Halloran fixes the landing on the 17th of May, A. M. 2736, or 1264 years before the birth of Christ. (Vol. II. p. 97.) The name Scoti, he derives from Scota, the wife of Niulus, High Priest of Phœnius, the inventor of letters, and ancestor of Milesius, in proof of which is given the following quotation from an Irish poem of the 9th century, entitled, Canam bunadhas na Nagaoidheal, or "Let us rehearse the origin of the Irish":—

> "Phaeni o Phaenius adbearta; brigh gan dochta
> Gaoidheal a Gaoidheal glasgharta: Scuit ó Scota." Or:—

This same Niall extended his enterprise to the coast of Britanny, and ravaged the maritime districts of the north-west of Gaul, during which expedition was captured the great Christian apostle, St. Patrick.

" It is clear the Irish are called Phenians from Phœnius, Gathelians from Gathelus (son of Niulus and Scota), and Scots from Scota." Vol. II. p. 55.

Mr. Wood puts aside all this high genealogy, and derives the word from the Gothic *Skut*, applied to the Belgic colony in Ireland; and thence afterwards transferred generally to the Irish at large (Enquiry, p. 81); while Camden, on the other hand, says, " Sure it is that they came out of Spain into Ireland, and part of them, departing thence, came and added a third nation unto the Britains and Picts in Britaine. . . . Neither can it be a marvaile, that a number of them withdrew themselves into Ireland, out of the north part of Spaine, which, as Strabo writes, is most baraine, and wherein men live most miserably." (Britannia, p. 66.) Moore shews, by a train of reasoning which cannot well be overthrown, that whatever Belgic, Northern, or Gaulish colonies may have been established in later years, the primitive inhabitants of the country were most probably derived from Celtic Spain, whose position, and early intercourse, by means of Phœnician and Carthaginian settlers on her western coast, naturally led to a colonization which could so easily have been effected. The historical traditions of both countries favour this assumption, and the fact of the Irish calling all foreigners *Gall*, or Gaill, seems to be conclusive against their Gaulish or British extraction. " Scoti sumus, non Galli," is their expression, says Ware; who, in the face of this, advocates the British extraction of the earlier inhabitants! Let the Belgic, Gallic, Scythic, or Danaic settlements be placed when and where they may, the great majority of the people of Ireland present, in their features, habits and language, all the living characteristics of an essentially Celtic population,—characteristics which time has not changed or conquest obliterated,—which more than 200 years constant intercourse with the Northmen could not efface,—which 600 years connection with England has not altered, and which even in the present day, are as distinctly visible as her fertile vallies and verdant hills. That the term *Scoti* was the distinctive appellation of the Irish, from an early period, down to the beginning of the eleventh century, and was afterwards, through colonization from Ireland, transferred to North Britain, is evident, from the application of the name in the works of antient writers; and the distinction between the Caledonian and Hibernian Scots, as well as the descent of the modern Scots from the Irish, is clearly pointed out in the following lines of an old Latin poem, called Palai-Albion, published in the reign of James I., and quoted by Sir James Ware in his Antiquities of Ireland:—

That such expeditions could have been carried on by means of the little fragile currachs, to which mode of transport some writers would limit the sea expeditions of the Irish at this period, seems scarcely credible, and while allowing full force to the fearless and enterprising spirit of the gallant Scoti, and the "contempto pelagi," alluded to by Eric of Auxerre, we must allow them some more rational means for conveying a body of troops across the British and Gallic channels than these frail barks.*

Not that the currachs were insufficient for individual enterprise of a more peaceful character, and it seems probable that the monks of the 8th century launched themselves on the northern ocean in these simple hide-covered skiffs, and thus effected a passage to their island retreats; for we find St. Cormac committing himself to the sea in a similar bark, and on one occasion he is said

> At quoniam Arctoo *Scotico* Rex noster ab orbe
> Nec minus occiduis, perhibent, *Scotus* ortus *Hibernis*,
> Qui Britonum parent sceptris.

Or, according to Harris's translation:—

> But since our King from *northern Scotia* came,
> Not less the Scots, if we may credit fame,
> Alike submiss to Britain's throne, derive
> Their lineage from *Hibernia's* western hive.

The Abbe Macgeoghan (p. 144) fixes the first emigration to Scotland in the third century, when they formed a settlement in Argyleshire, part of which was known by the name of *Ierna*, and the Hebrides were called *Erin*. "Foreigners," says Wood, "denominated the Highlands *Hibernia*, and their inhabitants *Hiberni*, as late as the eleventh century, and the Lowlanders called them *Irish*;" but after the destruction of the Picts, in the ninth century, the name *Scotia* was transferred to North Britain.—See Enquiry concerning the Prim. Inhab. of Ireland, p. 152.

* The currachs were probably used on such expeditions just as the "scaphas longarum navium" were by Cæsar, for landing the troops. See De Bell. Gall. B. iv. c. 26.

to have been out of sight of land for fourteen days and nights.*

But the remarkable passage in Tacitus, which has been so often cited by Irish historians in proof of the early maritime importance of their country, would lead to the conclusion that at a period, anterior to that now under consideration, the Irish were possessed of ships, or vessels of no mean size or description. "Ireland," the Roman historian says, "situated midway between Britain and Spain, and convenient also to the Gallic sea, connected a most powerful portion of the empire by considerable mutual advantages, the soil and climate, and the dispositions and habits of the people do not differ much from those of Britain: *the approaches and harbours are better known, by reason of commerce and the merchants.*"† "From this it appears,"

* "Nam cum ejus navis a terris per *quatuordecem* æstei temporis dies totidemque noctes, plenis velis austro flante vento, ad septentrionalis plagam cœli directo excurrere cursu." Adamnan. De S. Columb, as quoted by Moore, V. I. p. 191. Sir James Ware gives an extract from an MS. copy of the life of St. Brendan, in which the *Corragh* is described to be a very light barque ribbed and fenced with timbers, and covered with raw cow hides, the joining of the skins being daubed with butter. Into such a vessel, the writer adds, "they put materials for making two other boats, of other skins, and *provisions for forty days*, and butter to dress or prepare the skins for the covering of the boat, and other utensils necessary for human life. They also fixed a tree in the midst of the barque, and a sail, and other things belonging to the steering of a boat." [Antiq. Ir. II. p. 178-9.] Here long voyages seem to have been contemplated, and the same writer states on the authority of a passage in Marianus Scotus, an eminent Irish annalist of the 11th century, that "three Scots (Irishmen) named Duflan, Macbeth, and Magulmumenus, coveting to lead a life of pilgrimage for the Lord's sake, taking with them provisions sufficient for a week, fled privately out of Ireland, and entering into a boat, made of two hides and a half, in a miraculous manner, without sails or tackling, in seven days landed in Cornwall, and from thence made their way to king Alfred." Ware, V. II. p. 179.

† "Hibernia medio inter Britanniam atque Hispaniam sita, et Gallico quoque mari opportuna, valentissimam imperii partem magnis invicem usibus miscuerit. . . . . Solum cœlumque, et ingenia cultusque hominum haud multum a Britannia differunt, *meliùs aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatores cogniti.*" Vit. Agric. c. 24.

says Moore, "that though scarce heard of till within a short period by the Romans, and almost as strange to the Greeks, this sequestered island was yet in possession of channels of intercourse distinct from either; and that whilst the Britons, shut out from the continent by their Roman masters, saw themselves deprived of all that profitable intercourse which they had long maintained with the Veneti and other people of Gaul, Ireland still continued to cultivate her old relations with Spain, and saw her barks venturing on their accustomed course, between the Celtic Cape, and the Sacred Promontory,* as they had done for centuries before."

That Ireland must have been included amongst the Cassiterides which are known to have been visited by the Phœnicians, before the Gallic invasion of Britain, seems to be admitted by all unprejudiced writers upon this subject,† and

* Cape St. Vincent and Carnsore Point. The distance from Corunna to Cape Clear direct, is about 600 miles, but the greater part of the voyage might be performed within sight of land, by taking a circuitous course.

† "We may therefore admit, without much chance of error, that the Cassiterides visited by the Phœnicians, were the British *islands*, though the Romans understood by the name the islands of Scilly, with perhaps, part of the coast of Cornwall." Sharon Turner, Hist. Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 55. Pliny says: "*Plumbum* ex Cassiteride insula primus apportavit Midacritus." [Hist. Nat. vii. p. 57.] and *lead*, it is well known, can be reckoned amongst the mineral productions of Ireland: hence Donatus, writing in the fifth century, thus enumerates the characteristics of the country:—

Finibus occiduis, describitur optima tellus
Nomine et antiquis, Scotia scripta libris.
Insula dives opum Gemmarum, vestis, et Auri:
Commoda corporibus Aere, Sole, Solo.
Melle fluit pulchris, et lacteis Scotia campis
Vestibus, atque armis, frugibus, arte, viris.
Ursorum rabies nulla est ibi; sæva leonum
Semina, nec unquam Scotica terra tulit.
Nulla venena nocent, nec serpens serpit in herbâ,
Nec conquesta canit, garrula rana lacu;
In qua Scotorum gentes, habitare merentur:
Inclyta gens hominum, Milite, Pace, Fide!

that the mystery, in which these wily traders sought to conceal their commercial monopoly, has led to the obscurity in which the records of their voyages is involved. That the nautical knowledge and equipments of the Celtic population of Spain and Ireland must have received considerable advancement from this connection, is a natural consequence. Inhabiting the maritime regions of the Spanish peninsula, they were necessarily brought into immediate contact with the Carthaginian merchants, who had formed settlements on the same coast, and from whom they probably obtained not only their knowledge of navigation, but of those religious rites and ceremonies which were afterwards developed in the form of Druidism.

That the latter was not of British origin seems obvious. Cæsar's description of its observances is only reconcileable with his account of Britain, on the assumption that the chief seat of the Druids was in Ireland, for while he describes the Gauls as deriving their knowledge of Druidism from the British,* he represents the latter as inferior in civilization to the Gauls. Even in the time of Tacitus

Which is thus spiritedly translated by O'Halloran :—

Far westward lies an isle of antient fame,
By nature blessed, and Scotia is her name,
Enroll'd in books : exhaustless is her store,
Of veiny silver, and of golden ore.
Her fruitful soil for ever teems with wealth,
With gems her waters, and her air with health ;
Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow,
Her woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow.
Her waving furrows float with bearded corn ;
And arms and arts her envied sons adorn !
No savage bear, with lawless fury roves,
Nor fiercer lion through her peaceful groves ;
No poison there infects, no scaly snake
Creeps through the grass, nor frog annoys the lake ;
An island worthy of its pious race,
In war triumphant, and unmatch'd in peace !

* Comment. B. vi. c. xii.

the Britons are represented as *ferociæ*,* a state of barbarism obviously incompatible with the creation of a high wrought mysterious superstition, implying considerable intellectual advancement and scientific knowledge: a superstition, be it remembered, which is known to have existed amongst the Phœnicians and Carthaginians.

The Roman knowledge of the British isles was extremely limited and imperfect; before the time of Tacitus they were ignorant of the insular position of Britain,† and the acquaintance of Agricola with Ireland was principally derived from the doubtful information of a faithless Irish chief, who sought the Roman camp to betray his country.‡ Ireland also, according to Ptolemy, was formerly called *Little Britain*, therefore when Cæsar speaks of the Gauls repairing to Britain in order to become instructed in the mysteries of Druidism,§ the term may have been intended as a general expression for the British isles.‖

* "Plus tamen ferociæ Britanni præferunt." Vit. Agric. c. 11.

† "Hanc oram novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta, insulam esse Britanniam adfirmavit." Vit. Agric. c. 10.

‡ "Agricola expulsum seditione domestica unum ex regulis gentis exceperat, ac specie amicitiæ in occasionem retinebat. Sæpe ex eo audivi," &c. ib. c. 24.

§ Comment. B. vi. c. xii.

‖ It should be recollected also that Cæsar merely mentions the origin of the Druids as traditionary: "Disciplinam *existimatur* reperta esse in Britanniâ," &c. Ibid. Sharon Turner would appear to lean to the opinion of Druidism having originated with the Phœnicians or Carthaginians: "If this system," he observes, "was the creature of a more civilized people, none of the colonizers of Britain are so likely to have been its parents as the Phœnicians or Carthaginians; the fact so explicitly asserted by Cæsar, that the Druidical system began in Britain, and was thence introduced into Gaul, increases our tendency to refer it to those nations. The state of Britain was inferior in civilization to that of Gaul, and therefore it seems more reasonable to refer the intellectual parts of Druidism to the foreign visitors *who are known* to have cultivated such subjects, than to suppose them to have originated from the rude unassisted natives." Hist. Anglo-Saxons, v. i. p. 76.

The Druids, Cæsar tells us, are concerned in divine matters, superintend public and private sacrifices, interpret religious rites, determine controversies, inheritance, boundaries of land, rewards and punishments . . . "They are said to learn by heart a great number of verses, for which reason some continue in the discipline twenty years."—"*They use written characters.*"—"Much besides they discourse, and deliver to youth, upon the stars, and their motion, on the magnitude of the world and the earth, on the nature of things, on the influence and power of the immortal Gods."*

This particular class, combining the double office of judge and priest, although common in the time of Cæsar to the British isles, would naturally be found most enlightened in that part of the three kingdoms, whose direct communication with Spain, from a remote period, brought it into more immediate contact with the Phœnician navigators; and the appellations of "Sacred Isle," and "Sacred Promontory," in the works of Ptolemy† and Avienus,‡ lead us involuntarily to the conclusion, that, hundreds of years before the Roman invasion of Britain, Ireland was the depository of those Phœnician superstitions, which afterwards became adopted throughout the British Isles under the form of Druidism.

* Comment. B. vi. c. xiii.

† Hieron vel Sacrum Promon. (Carnsore Point) See Ptol. Geog.

‡ Ast hinc duobus in *sacram*, sic *insulam*
Dixere prisci, solibus cursus rati est:
Hæc inter undas multum cespitem jacit,
Eamque latè gens Hibernorum colit.
Oræ Maritimæ.

This alludes to a period so far back as the most flourishing epoch of Carthage, when Himilco, following the course of the Phœnician voyagers along the coast of Spain, extended his explorations to the Scilly isles, and is placed by some writers at 1000 years before the Christian era. "Of all these known and acknowledged features of the antient Celtic worship, of that superstition which spread wherever the first races of men dispersed

The root of the word Druid is to be found with little variation in the Hiberno-Celtic language of the present day, *Dráoj* signifying a Druid, magician or wise man, and *Dráoideacht* or Dráoide-achta, magic or the Druidical form of worship;* the golden ornaments in the shape of a half moon, which have been frequently found in the Irish bogs, are supposed to have been connected with these superstitions, of which lunar worship formed a part,† and add to the numerous testimonies in proof of its great antiquity.

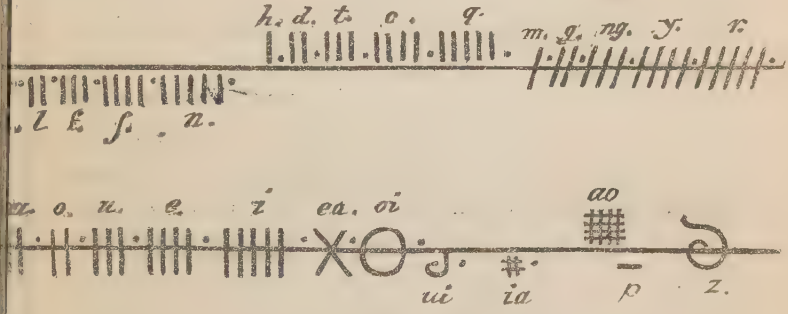
themselves, there remain, to this day, undoubted traces and testimonies, not only in the traditions and records of Ireland, but in those speaking monuments of antiquity which are still scattered over her hills and plains." Moore, I. p. 19. I cannot, however, concur in the opinion of those antiquaries who consider that any induction relative to the Druidical form of worship, can be drawn from the so called *Leachts, Cromleachs,* or *Pillar Stones,* which are to be met with in so many parts of Ireland. Similar monuments have been found in Scandinavia and Germany, where it is not pretended that Druidism obtained, and I have had opportunities of personally examining several rude stone structures both in Sweden and Norway, which bear a marked resemblance to those found in Ireland and parts of Britain. The *Opfer Stein* of Germany and *Offer Sten* of Scandinavia is the Cromlech of the British isles, and the *Bauta Sten* the upright or pillar stone, the former answering the double purpose of altar and grave, and the latter being commemorative or monumental. Such remains are to be found in all parts of Europe and Asia, and are probably coeval with the first races of mankind. The first act of Noah after leaving the ark, was "to build an *altar* and offer burnt offerings to the Lord." (Gen. viii. 20.), and Jacob sets up a *pillar*, and a *heap of stones* in testimony of the covenant between him and Laban. Gen. xxxi. 44, seq.

* See O'Brien in voce *Dráoj*. The original Irish word for Druid, according to Toland, is *Drui*, having the nominative plural *Druidhe*, which became afterwards corrupted into *Draoithe*. See Toland's Hist. of Druidism, p. 65. The following comparison of Scripture passages will shew the application of the term in Hiberno-Celtic:—"Anois *Draoithe* na Hégipte, dor innedursanfós aran modhgceadna le *mandroigheachtuibh*." Exod. VII. 11. [See two first books of Pentateuch from original Irish MSS. by T. Connellan, Lond. 1820.]—"And the *magicians* of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their *enchantments*."—English version. "Feuch Tangadar *Draoithe* o naird shoir go Hierusalem." Matt. ii. 1.—[Irish Bible by William Bhedel, Dub. 1827.]—"Behold there came *wise men* from the East to Jerusalem."—English version.

† Moore, p. 22.

But the high state of perfection, if it may be so called, in which the Druidical form of worship existed in Ireland, and the superior acquirements of her Pagan priesthood to those of the British, is best evinced by the vestiges of the Ogham or occult character in which their mysteries were recorded, and which presents a marked resemblance to the secret mode of writing, known to have been used for similar purposes by the hierarchies of the East.*

The following is the Ogham alphabet, as given by Sir James Ware in the second volume of his Antiquities of Ireland:—†



* Moore, p. 58.—"The word *Ogmius*," says Tolland, "is pure Celtic." . . . . the word *Ogum, Ogam*, or *Ogma*, is one of the most authentic words of the Irish language. . . . . From signifying the *secret of writing*, it came to signify *secret writing*. . . . There are several MS. treatises extant, describing and teaching the various methods." [Hist. of Druids, pp. 83, 84.] Sir James Ware says:—"I have, in my custody, an antient parchment book filled with such characters." [Vol. II. p. 19.] It is doubtless to this secret writing that Tacitus refers, when he says of the Germans: "Literarum secreta viri pariter ac feminæ ignorant," [De. Mor. Ger. c. 19.] thus agreeing with Cæsar's statement that they had neither Druids nor sacrifices:—"Nam neque Druides habent qui rebus divinis præsint, neque sacrificiis student."—De Bell. Gall. Lib. VI. c. xxi.

† Several inscriptions upon stone, written in this occult character,—than which nothing more simple and primitive can be well imagined,—have been discovered in the Province of Munster, by the Rev. Matthew Horgan, R. C. Rector of Blarney, in the County of Cork, assisted by the zealous Irish antiquaries Abraham Abell and John Windele of that city. Great incredulity was for some time expressed on the subject of the Ogham in-

It may therefore be presumed without much stretch of credulity that the same communication with the Phœnician settlers on the coast of Spain which transmitted these eastern superstitions to the Irish shore, may have also brought with it some knowledge of navigation, and the construction of ships; and therefore, that we are not driven to the hide-covered Currach for a means of transporting the Celtic settlers to the American coast.

Or if the theory of those be adopted, who would bring the first colonists of Ireland from Belgic, or Celtic Gaul, the description of that people by Cæsar will furnish equal evidence of maritime knowledge at a period sufficiently early to transport an expedition to America in the first centuries of the Christian era. The Veneti, inhabiting that district of Armoric Gaul, now known by the name of Vannes, are stated to have had vessels of considerable bulk and power, and admirably adapted as well for coasting voyages, as a stormy sea. The hull was of oak, the beams a foot in breadth, and fastened with iron, the bottom flat, the sails of leather, and what to nautical men may, perhaps, appear somewhat wonderful in those early days, the anchors were secured by means of *chain cables*.*

scriptions, many persons maintaining that they were natural furrows in the stone, however the question has been completely set at rest by the testimony of two unquestionable witnesses, Dr. Brown and the Rev. Mr. Young, in the 8th Vol. of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. See Moore's Hist. Ireland, Vol. I. p. 59, note, where Dr. Brown, at first a sceptic on the subject, is shewn to have acknowledged his error.

* "Namque ipsorum naves ad hunc modum factæ, armatæque erant: Carinæ aliquanto planiores quam nostrarum navium, quo facilius vada, ac decessum æstus excipere possent: proræ admodum erectæ, atque item puppes ad magnitudinem fluctuum, tempestatumque accommodatæ: naves totæ factæ ex robore, ad quamvis vim et contumeliam perferendam: transtra pedalibus in latitudinem trabibus confixa clavis ferreis digiti pollicis crassitudine: *anchoræ*, pro funibus *ferreis catenis* revinctæ: pelles pro velis, alutæque tenuitur confectæ, sive propter lini inopiam, atque ejus usus inscientiam, sive, eo quod est magis verisimile, quod tantas tempestates oceani, tantosque impetus ventorum sustineri, ac tanta onera navium regi

Looking therefore, either to the Phœnician, Carthagineian, Iberian, Belgic, Gallic, or Scythic intercourse of an early period,—to the more continuous Scandinavian occupation of later years,—or to the primitive mode of transport of the simple skiff, it is evident that ample nautical means were not wanting in Ireland to transfer any part of her population to the western shores of America long before the period when GREAT IRELAND became known to the Northmen.

The absence of any notice of such a migration in Irish Annals,—if such be the case,—is no argument against the probability of its existence. The most brilliant period of Irish History remains unsupported by Irish manuscripts. Of that enlightened age when pupils from all parts of Europe sought learning from Irish seminaries and Irish ecclesiastics, when Columbkill dispensed the light of Christianity to the Picts, Columbanus to the French, Gallus to the Swiss, and the brothers Ultan and Foilan to the Belgians, —when Virgilius, the Apostle of Carinthia, astounded the German bishops with his superior knowledge of cosmography and science*—not one authentic *written* record now remains.†

Invasion from without, and internal dissension from within, have swept away all written testimonies of a time, when the intellectual and religious eminence of Ireland

velis, non satis commode arbitrabantur."—Cæsar de Bell. Gall. Lib. III. c. xiii. The Irish technical expression of, "an cabla do cheangal dfaine an ancoire,"—"to bend the cable to the anchor's ring,"—is also presumptive evidence of a respectable description of craft.

* Virgilius or Feargal (*Fear*, vir) was accused of heresy before Pope Boniface, in the 8th century, for maintaining the sphericity of the earth, and the existence of Antipodes, contrary to the opinion of the times, which gave the globe a plane surface, and united the heavens to the earth beyond India. See Ware's Writers of Ireland, B. I. p. 50.

† This point is ably handled by Mr. Moore, who shews that the arguments against antient Irish history, founded upon the non-existence of any authentic MSS. prior to the 9th century (Psalter of Cashel,) applies with much greater force to the comparatively modern periods above mentioned, the records of which are never questioned. Hist. Ir. Vol. I. p. 308.

attracted the attention and admiration of neighbouring nations, and obtained for her the just distinctions of "Sacred Island" and "School of the West": it cannot therefore, be a matter of surprise that the records of earlier history should have been lost amid the ravages of such general devastation.*

But further examination of Icelandic Annals may possibly throw more light upon this interesting question, and tend to unravel the mystery in which the original inhabitants of America are involved. Lord Kingsborough's splendid publication† in 1829 first brought to the notice of the British public the striking similitude between Mexican and Egyptian monuments; the ruins of Palenque, Guatemala and Yucatan, the former rivalling the pyramids of Egypt or the ruins of Palmyra,‡ were only known to a few

* O'Halloran charges the English Government with a wholesale destruction of Irish MSS. previous to the reign of James I.:—

"What the false piety and mistaken zeal of the early Christians left unfinished, the Danes continued, and the Saxon and Norman invaders completed . . . In Ireland, until the accession of James I, it was a part of state policy to destroy or carry off all the manuscripts that could be discovered. "What the president Carew," says the author of the Analect (p. 555) "did in one province (Munster), Henry Sidney and his predecessors did all over the kingdom, being charged to collect all the manuscripts they could, that they might effectually destroy every vestige of antiquity and letters throughout the kingdom! The learned Archdeacon Lynch, with many others, give too many melancholy instances of the kind." Hist. Ireland, V. I. p. 94. "Many of these precious remains," says Moore, "were, as the author of Cambrensis Eversus tells us, actually torn up by boys for covers of books, and by tailors for measures. It was till the time of James I., says Mr. Webb, an object of government to discover and destroy every literary remain of the Irish, in order the more fully to eradicate from their minds every trace of their antient independence." Moore's Hist. of Ireland, V. I. p. 309, note.

† "Mexican Antiquities," a work upon which this lamented nobleman expended (at least) £30,000. and the best years of his life, but the circulation of which, from the small number of copies printed, and the inaccessible price (£150.) to the majority of the reading public, was necessarily very limited.

‡ The following short sketch of these remains, abridged from the costly volume of M. Baradère de St. Priest, appeared in the N. American Review for last October, and may, perhaps, be acceptable to the antiquarian reader:—

hunters until the end of the 18th century, and modern travellers are still engaged in bringing the hidden wonders of this and other regions of the vast American continent to the knowledge of the literary world.*

"Upon an eminence, towards the middle of the site of the city, rises a mass of buildings of a pyramidal form, with a base presenting a parallelogram, consisting of three different structures, receding in succession, and rising upon each other. This base has a circuit of 1080 feet and an elevation of 60 feet. It is built of stone, laid in a mortar of lime and sand. In the middle of the front, which faces the east, there is a large stone staircase, which conducts to the principal entrance of the temple. This edifice is 240 feet long by 140 feet wide, and 36 feet high, which, added to the height of the base, gives a total elevation of 96 feet. The walls are 4 feet thick, and constructed of stones of large dimensions. The doorways are unequal in their size; nothing indicates that they were ever closed, and the same observation applies to all the other buildings. The windows are of various forms, and generally very small. The arches are 20 feet high, and form a truncated angle at the top, terminated by large stones, placed transversely. The roofs are of flag stones, well joined and very thick. The whole edifice is covered, externally and internally, with a stucco containing oxyde of iron; it is crowned by a large frieze, set in two double cornices, of a square form. Between the doors, and upon all the pillars, forming a corridor around the edifice, are encrusted 80 *bas reliefs* in stucco, representing personages 7 feet high; and hieroglyphics, whose careful execution announces that the plastic art had made great progress among the builders of these works. Their exterior view offers a magnificence to which the interior corresponds; immense halls, ornamented with bas reliefs in granite, in which the figures are 12 feet high, sculptured hieroglyphics, courts, subterraneous passages, ornamented also with sculpture, a *round tower*, with four stages, whose staircase is supported by a vault,—such is a sketch of the principal characteristics, which this temple offers. . . Other structures of the same character are found upon the same plateau . the whole number of ruins hitherto discovered, is eighteen . . . . The flat roofs of the palace were overgrown with enormous trees; Mr. Waldeck cut down one which measured 9 feet 3 inches in diameter. By counting the concentric layers, which botanists suppose mark the annual growth of trees, he found they were 1609, and hence deduces the length of the period that has elapsed since the edifice was abandoned to the domain of the forest."

* Dr. Lund has lately communicated to the Society of Northern Antiquaries, the remarkable discovery made by him in the interior of Brazil, of human bones in connection with those of extinct races of animals. Both were in a complete fossil state; the formation of the human skull is stated to be extraordinary, the forehead forming a considerable angle with the face,

The argument founded upon the absence of Irish records might as reasonably be applied to these later publications of the north; and why, may it as well be asked, was the discovery of America by the Northmen in the 10th century, not satisfactorily established until the nineteenth? — The name of Vinland was, doubtless, known to Torfæus; and Wormskiold, Malte Brun and others, following the erroneous calculation which he had made of its locality, fixed it in a latitude with which the physical features of the country did not correspond:* hence the whole statement in the Sagas was long looked upon as fictitious; but the more accurate recent investigations of Danish archæologists have set the question at rest, and the DISCOVERY OF AMERICA BY THE NORTHMEN has assumed its proper position in the history of the TENTH CENTURY.

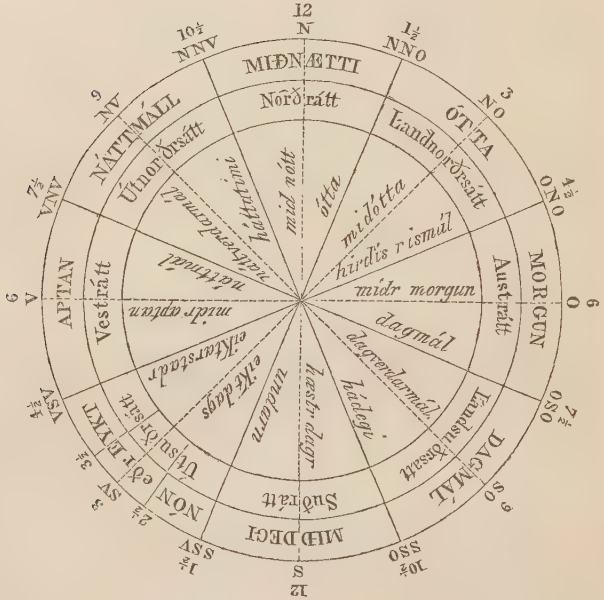
The existence of a Celtic or Irish settlement upon the south-eastern shores of North America, does not preclude the co-existence of other races upon the western and northern shores. A colony from western Ireland may have been planted on the east, while tribes from eastern Asia had settled on the west; and both have driven before them the less civilized, or more feeble Scythic wanderers, who may have entered at the north: all émanating,—but by distinct and separate channels,—from the one great centre, which peopled the wide spread sphere, and thus multiplying, in every region and every clime, the living evidences of those sacred records which offer peace and immortality to man.

and thus differing from the skulls of all known races of men, but at the same time presenting a similitude to the human figures on Mexican monuments: a hemispherical stone, with a smooth surface, which had apparently been used for rubbing, was found in connection with these bones. Berlingske Tidende, Kiöbenhavn, Feb. 12, 1841.

* Torfæus, in consequence of an erroneous interpretation of the passage, pp. 64, 65, in the Saga of Erik the Red, relating to the length of the day, which he took to be eight hours instead of nine, fixed the latitude of Vinland at 49°, being that of Newfoundland.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.



COMPLETE DIAL

OF

THE ANCIENT NORTHMEN,

ACCORDING TO THE

PROJECTION AND EXPOSITION

OF

PROFESSOR FINN MAGNUSEN,

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES.

EXPOSITION OF THE DIAL OF THE ANTIENT NORTHMEN.

ALIQUOT PARTS OF THE NATURAL DAY.		ASSUMED POSITION OF THE SUN.				NAMES OF THE VARIOUS PORTIONS OF THE DAY.		HOURS.
		TERMS NOW IN USE.	TERMS USED IN					
EIKT.	STUND.		ICELAND.	FARŒ.	NORWAY.	ICELAND.	NORWAY.	
	1	E.N.E.	Midm. Ln. & A. Austr.	Hålga[1] Estur. Estur.	—	Hirdis rismál.[2]	Solrenning.[18]	$4\frac{1}{2}$ A.M.
I.	2	E.		H. Landsuur.	Ouster.	Midr. morgun.[3]	Memorra.[19]	6
	3	E.S.E.	M. A. ok. Ls. Landsudr.	Landsuur.	—	Dagmál.[4]	För-Duur.[20]	$7\frac{1}{2}$
II.	4	S.E.		H. Middag.	Landsör.	Dagverdarmál.[5]	Davremaal.[21]	9
	5	S.S.E.	M. Ls. ok. S. Sudr.	Suur (Middag.)	—	Hádegi[6]	Hög Dag.[22]	$10\frac{1}{2}$
III.	6	S.		H. Utsuur (H. Noon)	Sör.	Hœstr. dagr.[7]	Högst Dag.[23]	12
	7	S.S.W.	M. S. ok. V. Utsudr.	Utsuur (Noon).	—	Undarn.[8]	Undaalen.[24]	$1\frac{1}{2}$ P.M.
IV.	8	S.W.		H. Vestur.	Utsör.	Eykt dags.[9]	(Ogt) Noon.[25]	3
	9	W.S.W.	M. Us. ok. V. Vestr.	Vestur.	—	Eyktarstadr.[10]	Ogterdag.[26]	$4\frac{1}{2}$
V.	10	W.		H. Utnoor.	Vester.	Midraptan.[11]	Midefta.[27]	6
	11	W.N.W.	M. V. ok. Un. Utnordr.	Utnoor.	—	Náttmál.[12]	Natmaal.[28]	$7\frac{1}{2}$
VI.	12	N.W.		H. Noor.	Utnör.	Náttverdarmál.[13]	Naatvær,[29]	9
	13	N.N.W.	M. Un. ok. N. Nordr.	Noor.	—	Háttatimi.[14]	Afdag.[30]	$10\frac{1}{2}$
VII.	14	N.		H. Landnoor.	Nör.	Mid nótt.[15]	Högstnaatte.[31]	12
	15	N.N.E.	M. N. ok. Ln. Landnordr.	Landnoor.	—	Otta.[16]	Otta.[32]	$1\frac{1}{2}$
VIII.	16	N.E.			Landnör.	Midotta.[17]	Ottemaal.[33]	3

EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS.

1. *Hálga* signifies *halvgaaen*, half gone, and is used here with reference to the position of the sun : but is otherwise employed with reference to the time and hour.

2. See 18 Here the morning is understood to commence.

3. Midmorning, also called *rismál*, or rising time, now obsolete.

4. Still used by the peasantry of Iceland to signify the particular time of the day, See Olafsen, I. p. 40 ; Troil, p. 90 ; Henderson, I. 187.*

5. Forenoon meal time.

6. In most parts of Iceland the peasantry still place this daymark in the same position. See Olafsen, Troil, and Henderson, as above.

7. Highest day. This very antient term is still used by the peasantry of the West of Iceland instead of *hádegi*, which is now, incorrectly, considered to refer to 12 o'clock. See Biörn Haldorson s Atli, p. 47.

8. Now called *midmunda*. Undarn occurs in old northern MSS. both to signify afternoon, as also a meal or convivial party held at that time: See Rafn's Krákumál or Lodbrókarkvida, pp. 2, 29, 96-97. The Mœso-Gothic word *undaurn* is used in a similar sense, as also the Alemannic (old High German) *untorn*, and Anglo-Saxon *undern :* also in the old English of Chaucer, although the word was occasionally used in Anglo-Saxon for a particular part of the forenoon. See infra 9, and 24.

* "About 8 o'clock," he never mentions half hours. Confer ante, p. 64, 65, and note. *Stadr* signifies bounds or limits, hence "dagmalastad," the *beginning* of dagmal, and "eyktarstad" the *end*, of eykt. See ibid. and Dial.

9. This stund formed the latter half of the Eikt *undarn*, (Non edr Eykt) or 3 o'clock P. M., and it is remarkable that the Anglo-Saxons called this time *heah undern* (See 8). On the other hand, the Roman Catholic clergy in England, called it *non*, from the Mass Nona of the horæ canonicæ, which took place at the same time of the day, whence the old Saxon *non*, old high German *nuon*, and Scandinavian nón. See 25.

10 This word signifies the Eykt's place, termination, or close. See ante pp. 64, 65 and note. It was also called *aptan* or *aptansmál*, as the evening was here considered to commence. See infra 26, 27.

11. The middle of the evening, now called in Iceland *midaptan*. See infra 27.

12. Still similarly placed in most parts of Iceland. See Olafsen, Troil, and Henderson, as above.

13. Evening meal time.

14. Bed time.

15. Midnight.

16. This word corresponds to the Mœso Gothic *uthvo*, the Alemannic *uohta*, *ouht*, *ocht*, *uht*, *uchtenstond*, the Belgic and Frisiac *ucht*, and the Anglo-Saxon *uht*, *uhtentid*. See Rafn's Krákumál or Lodbrókarkvida, pp. 12, 124, and infra 32, 33.

17. The middle of the ótta, called also *kana-ótta*, or the cock otta, or *kana-galan*, cock crowing. See infra 33.

18. Sunrise-time, still called *aabitsmaal*, or summer refreshment time, in Iceland and the Farœ islands.

19. Midmorning, called in modern Danish, *midmorgen*. Swed. *midmorgon*.

20. The fore-breakfast, corresponding to the Frisian *vordard*. This stund is still called in particular districts of Norway *frokostbeel*, (see infra 21.) corresponding expressions to the antient *dagmal* are also found in the dialects of the peasantry of Denmark and Sweden in the present day.

21. Called also *daguur*. The antient *dagurdr*, *dagverdr* has undergone great alterations in the later dialects, particularly in Norway; otherwise in Swedish it is still *dagvard*, in Danish

davre, *daver*, *dover*, *douer*, and in Frisiac *daagerd*, *dauerd*, *daaerd*, *dard*, &c. See supra 5.

22. To this there are several corresponding terms in old Northern languages, see supra 6, 7, and infra 23. In certain districts of Norway, this portion of time was also called *halfgaaet til middag*, or half gone to noon.

23. Otherwise *hæsdag*, corresponding to the old Northern term. See 22.

24. Called also *ondol*, *ondolsmaal*. Traces of the antient *undarn* (ondarn) particularly as applied to noon or afternoon-mealtime, midday sleep, &c are to be found in the peasant dialects of Sweden, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain.

25. See supra 9. This corresponds with the British shepherd's *high noon* as applied to 3 o'clock P. M. See Brand's Pop. Antiq. by Sir H. Ellis, I. p. 457-460. The Bavarian *non*, and Westphalian *none*, &c. are still in use ; on the other hand, the English *noon*, and the Dutch *noen* now signify 12 o'clock. We have otherwise good grounds for believing that down to the year 1700, the peasantry of Denmark called this stund *ögt*. See infra 26. It would appear that several expressions amongst the Germans having reference to holy eves, and which are still in use amongst the peasantry, are related to the term *eykt* or *öikt* of the Scandinavians, such as *aeckt* in Suabia, *uckt* in Ditmarsh, &c.

26. Also *ögterdags beel*, *ögtebeel*. These and several other words, which are of great importance in fixing the time of the day by which the latitude of Vinland has been determined (See ante pp. 64, 65, note), are to be found collected from the dialects of the Danish and Norwegian peasantry in the large Danish Dictionary, 4 Vol. sec. 3, p. 17, let. O.

27. The Anglo-Saxons called this time of the day *ofer-non*, as the Norwegians, for similar etymological reasons, call it *etter-ökt*. To these are several corresponding terms in Denmark and Sweden.

28. Amongst the Scandinavians the later part of the evening

was considered to commence here, and was called *kveld*, *kvöld*, A. S. *cvyld*: this term is still used in the modern dialects.

29. See supra 13.

30. Denotes the taking off, expiration, or end of the day.

31. Literally the highest night. In some British authors we find the expression "noon of the night."

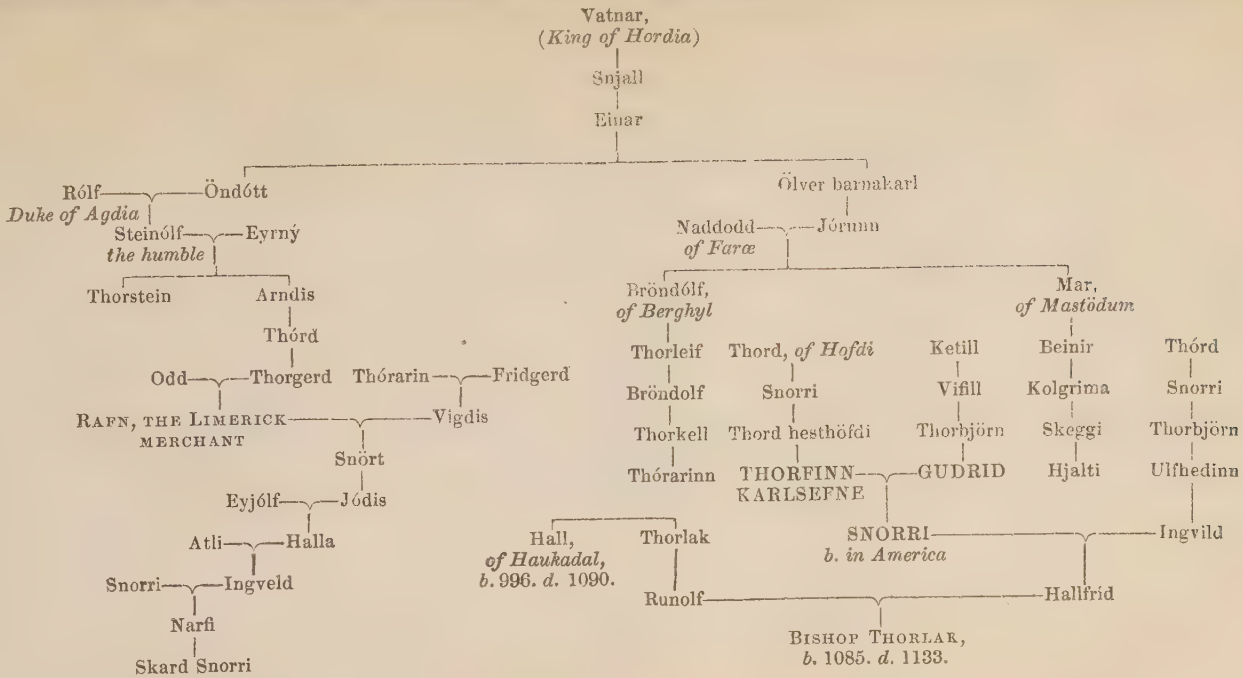
32. Still used in the modern Danish and Swedish dialects.

33. See supra 17.

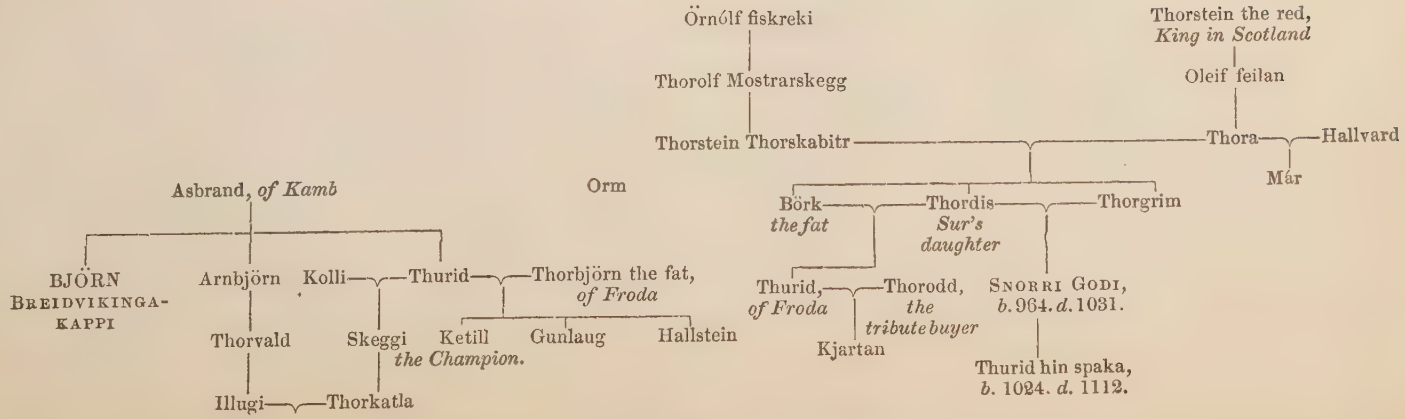
N.B.—An obliging communication from Professor Rafn, when this sheet was in the press, has led to a slight change in the projection of the Dial, as given by Professor Finn Magnusen, and which, although involving no point of importance, has been adopted for the sake of simplifying the illustration. Confer. Finn Magnusen "on the Antient Scandinavians' division of the times of the Day." Mem. de la Soc. des Antiq. du Nord. Copenh. 1838.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES.

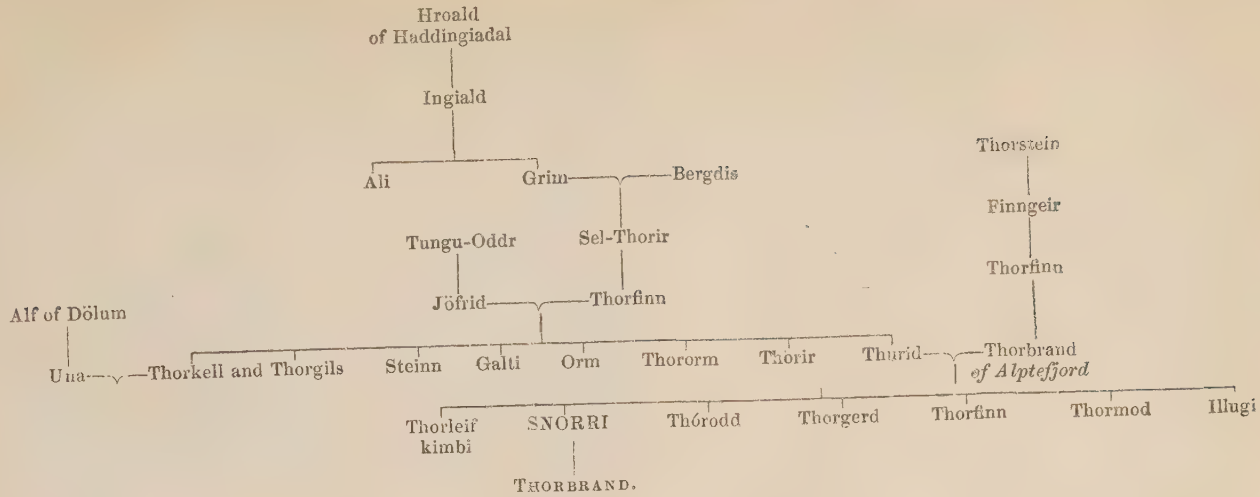
III.—GENEALOGY OF BISHOP THORLAK, AND RAFN THE LIMERICK MERCHANT.



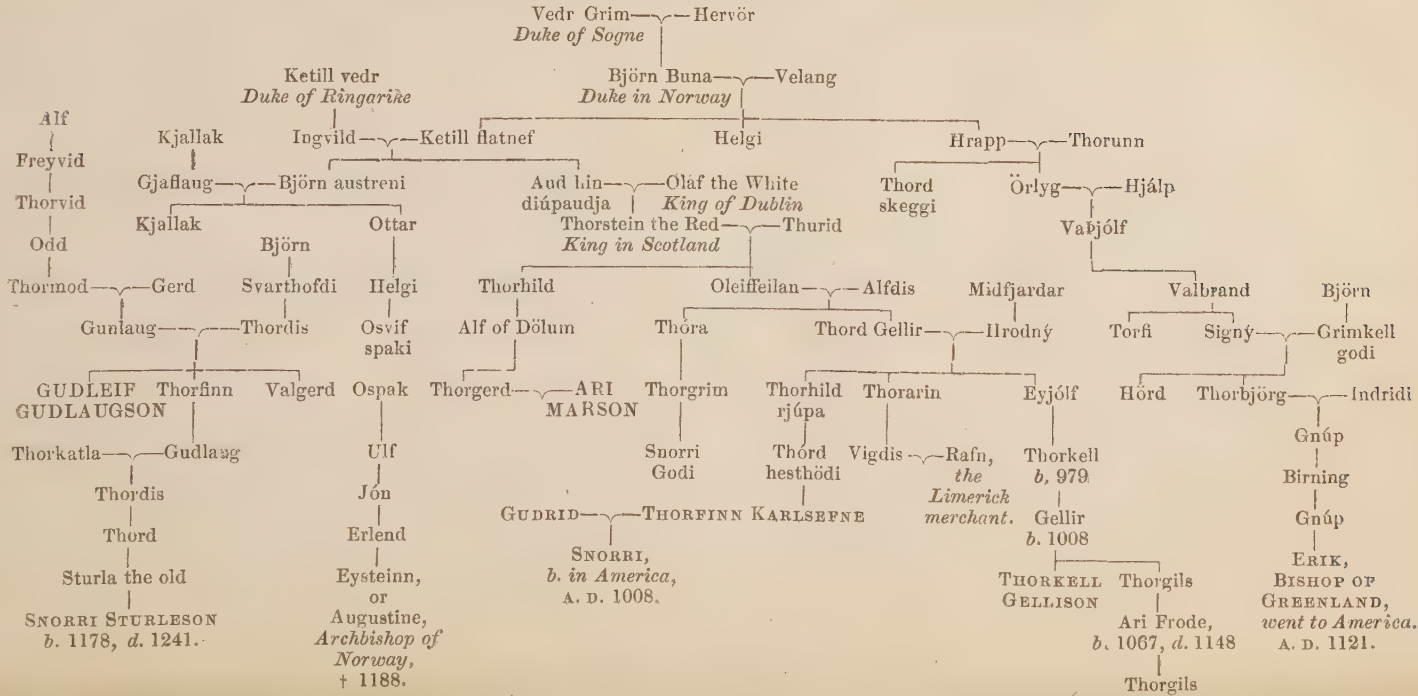
IV.—GENEALOGY OF BJORN THE CHAMPION OF BREIDAVIK, AND SNORRI GODI.



V.—GENEALOGY OF SNORRI THORBRANDSON.

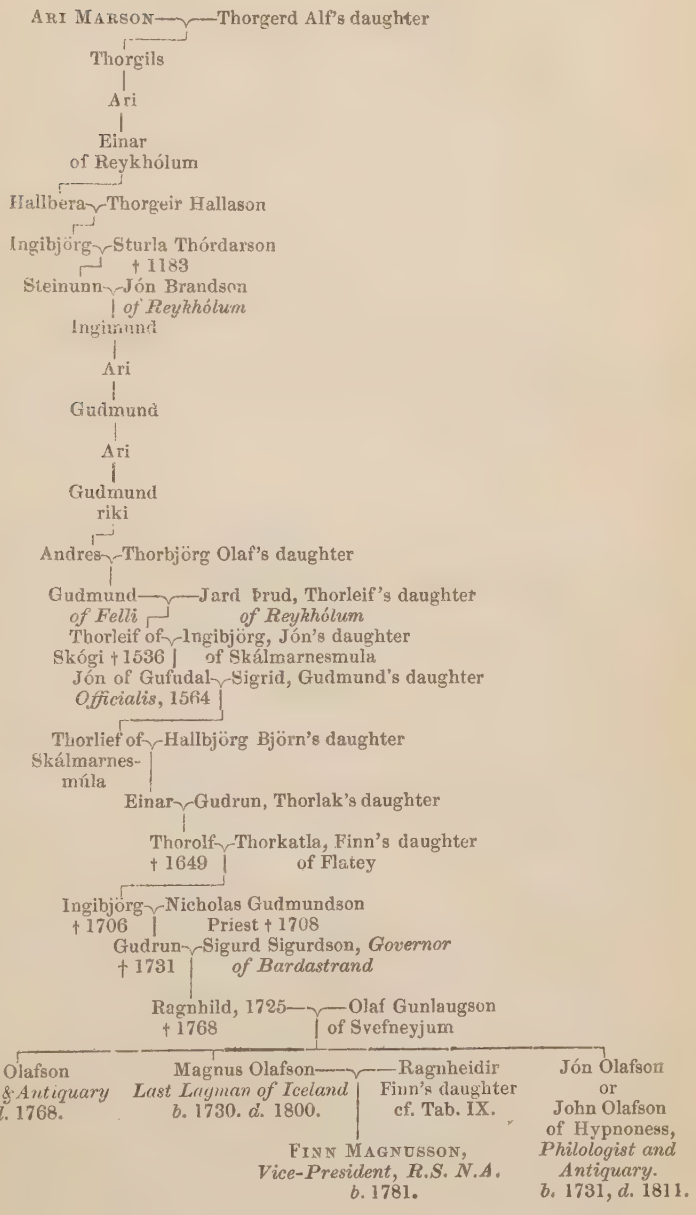


VI.—GENEALOGY OF GUDLEIF GUDLAUGSON, AND ERIK BISHOP OF GREENLAND.



VII.—DESCENDANTS OF ARI MARSON,

Brought down to the Present Time.


Ari Marson—Thorgerd Alf's daughter
Thorgils
Ari
Einar of Reykhólum
Hallbera—Thorgeir Hallason
Ingibjörg—Sturla Thórdarson † 1183
Steinunn—Jón Brandson of Reykhólum
Ingimund
Ari
Gudmund
Ari
Gudmund riki
Andres—Thorbjörg Olaf's daughter
Gudmund of Felli—Jard Þrud, Thorleif's daughter of Reykhólum
Thorleif of Skógi † 1536—Ingibjörg, Jón's daughter of Skálmarnesmula
Jón of Gufudal Officialis, 1564—Sigrid, Gudmund's daughter
Thorlief of Skálmarnesmúla—Hallbjörg Björn's daughter
Einar—Gudrun, Thorlak's daughter
Thorolf † 1649—Thorkatla, Finn's daughter of Flatey
Ingibjörg † 1706—Nicholas Gudmundson Priest † 1708
Gudrun † 1731—Sigurd Sigurdson, Governor of Bardastrand
Ragnhild, 1725 † 1768—Olaf Gunlaugson of Svefneyjum
Eggart Olafson Poet, Physcn. & Antiquary b. 1726. d. 1768.
Magnus Olafson—Ragnheidir Last Lagman of Iceland b. 1730. d. 1800.—Finn's daughter cf. Tab. IX.
Finn Magnusson, Vice-President, R.S. N.A. b. 1781.
Jón Olafson or John Olafson of Hypnoness, Philologist and Antiquary. b. 1731, d. 1811.

VIII.—DESCENDANTS OF THORFINN KARLSEFNE AND GUDRID, *To the Present Time.*

1007
THORFINN KARLSEFNE . . . . . GUDRID, THORBJARNAR'S DAUGHTER

Snorri Thorfinnsson . . . . . Ingveld, Ulfhedin's daughter

Steinunn — Einar Ketillsson

Thorstein Ranglatr

Ketill † 1173 — Alfheid, Thorleif's daughter

Thorlak *Priest* †1240 — Gudlaug, Eyjulf's daughter

Ketill *Priest and Lagman* † 1273 — Halldóra, Thorvald's daughter, *Sister of Count Gissur, first Viceroy of Iceland*

Valgerd — Narfi Snorrason *of Kolbeinstödum* † 1284

Thorlák *Lagman*, 1290 † 1303 — Helga, Nicholas' daughter

Ketill of Kolbeinstödum, *Viceroy*, 1214 † 1342

Vigfús of Kolbeinstödum, 1390

Narfi of Kolbeinstödum

Erlend *of Kolbeinstödum* — Hallbera, Sölmundar's daughter

Erlend *Governor of Rangardal* — Gudrid, Thorvard's daughter

Vigfús, *Lagman*, 1513-1519 † 1523 — Gudrún, Pal's daughter

Jón

Gudrid — Sæmund Erikson

Gudlaug

Gudrun *Sæmund's daughter* — Arni Gislason of Lidarend

See Tab. IX.

Gisli, *Governor*

Gudmund † 1605

Salvör

Markús — Gudrún *Sister of celebr. Torfæus*

Gudrid — Hans Willumsen Londeman, *Dane, Govr. Arnes*

Edward Londeman of Rosenkrone, *Assessor, Chief Court, Denm. & Norway, b.* 1680. *d.* 1749.

Christian of Hoff — Maria Margareta Londeman, *b.* 1714. *d.* 1762.

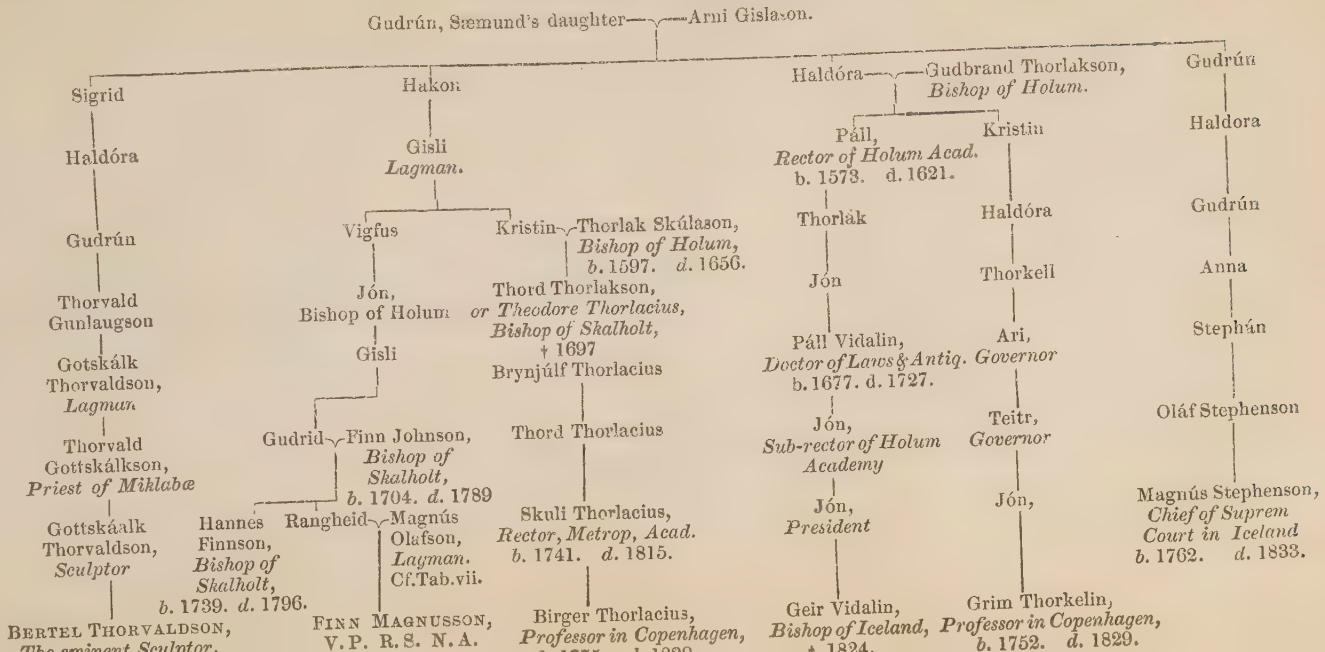
Marcus Gerhard, *Count of Rosenkrone, Danish Ambassador in Saxony, &c.* *b.* 1738. *d.* 1811.

Hans Edward Henry of Hoff, *b.* 1738. *d.* 1779.

Christian Henry of Hoff-Rosenkrone, *Baron of Rosendal, in Norway, b.* 1768.

IX.—CONTINUATION OF THE DESCENDANTS OF THORFINN KARLSEFNE AND GUDRID.

(Confer. Tab. VIII.)



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